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SERMONS.

BY

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First Sunday after Easter.

April 19, 1857.

ROMANS v. 1.

"THEREFORE BEING JUSTIFIED BY FAITH, WE HAVE PEACE WITH GOD THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST."

IN the Collect for this day, the belief that Christ rose for our justification is made the ground of a prayer that we may put away the leaven of malice and wickedness, and serve God in pureness of living and truth. In the passage I have just read, the same belief is said to be the ground of peace. Are we not often tempted to think that the doctrine of justification by faith has made men less careful about putting away wickedness, less diligent and pure in the service of God? Are we not often tempted to think of it as the cause of wars rather than of peace? The reasons for both these suspicions ought to be seriously examined. I shall begin with the last. I am convinced that wars within and wars without, in individuals and in nations, have been connected with this faith. I do not see how it could have been otherwise. I dare not wish that it had been otherwise.

I cannot see how the peace of which the Apostle speaks could have been won if it had been otherwise.

Supposing a superior Being sent this message to men: "I will surround you with all possible felicities during the time that you are sojourning here upon earth; I will remove from you all possible plagues and discomforts." Would this be the message of peace which man requires? No! for he has proved by a long series of experiments that he can make plagues and curses for himself; that he can convert felicities into plagues and curses. He has proved that if left to himself he not only can do this, but will do it. The history of the world, the history of those countries especially in which nature has been most lavish of her bounties, where soil and climate have been most propitious to all animal existence, is little else than a demonstration of this fact. We might fancy that in such circumstances, though there was little to awaken exertion, little to raise man into any condition beyond one of physical enjoyment, yet that he might realize that perfectly. But it is not so. The man sunken into a beast, cannot have the ease and luxury of the beast any more than his innocence. In his lowest depth there will still be the dim consciousness of something higher, which will keep him restless. The animals whom he cannot tame or extirpate, will become his oppressors; there will be some of his own race who have still enough of strength left to make the others slaves. A deliverance from imme-

diate pain, an overflow of immediate pleasure, is not (the ancients knew this as well as ourselves) a security that men will continue to possess peace—is not even the temporary gift of it.

How is it if the immediate gift is changed into a promise, if the deliverance from sorrow is a future and only possible one? No doubt if you can make a man look forward, you do him a wonderful good, you raise him in the scale of existence; he is not a mere grovelling animal any longer. It is not surprising therefore that people have talked so much about the advantage of expecting another state of existence, of the good which must come from hoping for its blessings; of the providence which is awakened in a man who is taught how he may escape a distant evil that is threatening him. There has been no exaggeration in statements of this kind,—there scarcely can be any. But there may be the most fatal omissions in them, omissions which make that which is told worse than a mockery. The argument for a future state, as our great Butler has so well shown, arises from the sense of continuance which there is in our minds. That which is, must be assumed to go on, unless you can bring some decisive proof that it is interrupted. There is no proof, from the reason of the thing or from the analogy of nature, that death is such an interruption. If not, the belief of a present state involves the belief of a future one. But what is to continue? What is it that is not interrupted? It

is my existence. It is I whom death cannot dissolve; when it has destroyed everything that is about me, all the conditions in which I am living, it yet leaves me. What is the use of telling me about felicities hereafter or miseries hereafter, if you tell me at the same time, if my own heart and conscience tell me, that I shall be the same, with the same capacity of making a hell of heaven or a heaven of hell which I have now? It can be no message of peace to me, that there is a futurity of bliss or a futurity of misery, unless you can first reveal to me something about myself, unless you can reveal to me how I may not be the subject of a perpetual intestine war. And this must be a present message. It cannot be merely of something which is to be. Providence to avoid future evils may be a very desirable quality. But what is it, if I think that I am myself the great evil of which I need to be rid? Hope may be the most glorious of all possessions. What can I hope for, if my own being is my continual terror and torment?

Perhaps you will think that I am putting questions which never can occur to any practical mind. I believe, brethren, I am bringing these questions exactly to the point at which they are practical, the point at which they cease to be mere playthings for school logicians, the point at which they become mighty in their influence on the hearts of individuals and the destinies of nations. We talk about the glorious Reformation in the sixteenth century. Do we know

what those fine words signify? Do we know that that Reformation began, and went on, and grew to be a fact for the history of Europe, because a poor solitary monk was taught that he himself was the cause of all the anguish which he was suffering, and that no message from God or man could bring him any peace which did not tell him how he might be delivered from the burden of himself? Yes, brethren, this monk learnt in his cell that no possible grant of present or future felicity could avail him anything, and that no remission of present or future penalties could avail him anything, unless he himself were raised to another ground, unless there were a testimony, a clear, authentic, satisfactory testimony which he could not gainsay: "Thou art a right and true man; God accounts thee so; thou mayest account thyself so. It is no delusion; it is certain that thou art so."

Luther had done fewer of what are called evil acts than most; he had in vain sought comfort from that recollection. He had tried to do more good acts than most people. Were they good acts? Did they spring from a good root? Did they not spring from a very evil one? Were they not contrivances to escape the wrath of a Being whom he disliked; one from whom he was flying, whom he would have wished not to be the lawgiver of the world, whom he would have wished not to exist? And now the old words of his childhood, that God is the forgiver of sins, that God is the justifier,

that God has sent His Son to reconcile man to Himself, came upon him with the most amazing revelation of the proud, dark self-will which had been striving with a God of Mercy, and converting Him into a Devil. And he found from this Epistle to the Romans, that St. Paul, fifteen centuries before, living in an eastern atmosphere, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, had passed through the same processes of mind which he, a German priest of the order of Augustine, was passing through; that *he* had had to find that in himself dwelt no good thing; that *he* had cried, "Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" that *he* had received Christ's resurrection as a testimony that God had justified him, and accounted him righteous, and did not impute his trespasses unto him; that that faith had made *him* another man, a man who could trust God and love God, instead of turning from Him and hating Him; that that faith had made *him* know that he was indeed what God had declared him to be,—a righteous person, one who in the strength of God's righteousness could rise above his own unrighteous, contentious, suspicious, hateful self, one who might claim that gracious, humble, true life which is in Christ Jesus. What St. Paul had done, Luther could do. He could believe that God was what He had declared Himself to be; he could cease to fight with Him; he could abandon a lie which made him a slave; he could lay hold of the truth which made him free.

This was for himself. But he heard that a man was going about Germany dispensing to men indulgences for the past, the present, and the future. It was not only or chiefly that the language of this man was brutal and blasphemous; these were becoming and suitable accidents of the doctrine he delivered. It was not even chiefly that he set these indulgences to sale; that was a decisive proof, which at a later time Luther might be able to recognize, that he and his masters were really worshiping Mammon and not God. But now the whole horror of the man's acts and words appeared to him to centre in this, that he preached indulgence and not forgiveness; the removal of the penalty of deeds, and not the deliverance of the doer from the sin which was at the root of those deeds; the ease and comfort of the sinner, not the justification of him, and the making him really and actually righteous. And it was the Gospel that there is a deliverance of man from sin, from selfishness, from distrust and hatred of God; that there is a real righteousness for men, which they may put on instead of the false, unreal self-righteousness, which is only another name for untruth, and bitterness, and hatred;—it was this Gospel which went forth through Europe at that time, and attracted and subdued multitudes of suffering, longing hearts, and shook thrones, ecclesiastical and civil, which did not stand upon righteousness, and produced all the good and great effects which have followed from the Reformation; all the

effects that did not come from the intrigues of princes, the greediness of nobles, the arrogance of doctors, the disputatiousness and bitterness of sects. These, no doubt, have infused themseves into it; these have introduced a new kind of war; these are as contrary to peace with God as to peace among men. They are so, because they have aimed at producing a false, artificial peace. They are so, because they have introduced another doctrine for that which is set forth in my text.

That text appeared to Luther, and those who listened to him, the announcement of the one fact with which the conscience of a human being had need to be acquainted. "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God," was a sentence which, they said, expressed all that it greatly concerned sinful creatures to understand. If that opinion was too limited and exclusive, it was far truer than any of the moderate and qualified views which are sometimes substituted for it. It is a sign, I suspect, of weakness rather than comprehensiveness, if we treat with contempt or indifference even the most vehement forms of speech in which our forefathers delivered themselves upon the subject. For the law or principle upon which a man is at peace with his Creator, and therefore with himself, is certainly declared here or nowhere. It must be worth our while to look at each of the words attentively, and to consider what it must have said to other men, and what it says to us.

I. The common meaning which is put upon the word *justified*, may not be all that St. Paul intended by it, not all that we need to see in it. But it must have a great worth. No one has a right to put it aside till he has fully searched it out. No one, I think, will put it aside who has searched it out; he will not hope to see any deeper until he has realized that which appears on the surface of the phrase. By justified, all people understand acquitted. It is not in this place certainly that I would complain of such an explanation as forensic. *Your* language ought to be, and must be to a certain extent, to a very great extent, forensic. The members of a profession should never rashly discard the tools and instruments which belong to it; they should regard them as helps in their moral and spiritual education; they should not be content till they find the passage—there always is a passage—from professional habits and formulas to those which are human. In this instance the error of divines has arisen, I think, from their not adhering as strictly as St. Paul has adhered to that which you would at once recognize as the true idea of acquittal. St. Paul never forgets—I think Luther never forgot, whatever terms he may have used to convey the impression—that a man is acquitted of a charge or imputation, not of a penalty. By being true to the legal sense of the word, the Apostle is true also to the moral sense of it. The burden of an accusing conscience, the guilt which rests on the man himself, is

that from which he craves to be justified. St. Paul affirms that God does justify him from this. He does not impute sin to him. But how could this be? He had been affirming before, with the greatest vehemence, against the Jew, that all God's judgments are according to truth, that there can be no respect of persons, no fictitious way of looking at acts or men with Him. If a man is a sinner, and feels himself to be a sinner, how can it be a true thing to pronounce him not a sinner—to account him righteous? St. Paul clears up the amazing paradox, having first had to find the solution of it as it bore on his own being. "In me," he says, "that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. I live, yet not I; but Christ liveth in me. I feel myself a sinner, for I am utterly and absolutely a sinner, apart from Him in whom all righteousness dwells. God accounts me righteous, for He does not look upon me apart from Him in whom He created me; He does not look upon me in the false way in which I have looked at myself. He justifies me; He does not account me that which in my proper legitimate state, as united to Christ, I am not; He treats me as that which, in this my proper and reasonable state, I am. God justifies me, and His judgment of me is according to truth. He holds me to be righteous because He has made me so." I have not departed, you see, in the least from the force which people ordinarily give to the words: I have vindicated their use of it. But, in doing so, I

have claimed for the word its natural etymological sense. The justified man is not *only* one that is acquitted, not *only* one who is set down as righteous, but one who, in the strictest sense, has become, or has been made, righteous.

II. And thus we are able to feel the force of the next words, "Being justified by *faith*." St. Paul has been speaking throughout his epistle of God as a just and righteous Being, of God as the Justifier. He recurs to this language again and again. It is the characteristic language of his epistle. Any other makes the statements of it incoherent and contradictory. But because God is the justifier, He who accounts man righteous and makes him righteous, a man is justified or made righteous by faith. He believes that God is such a Being as He has manifested Himself to be; not such a one as he had imagined Him to be. He believes God to will his righteousness and salvation; not, as he thought He had willed, his destruction. He believes God's righteousness to be his only protection, refuge, security; not, as he had felt it to be, the witness against him, the ground and ratification of the curse upon him. He believes that that which God curses is not himself, but his enemy, the evil nature which he is carrying about with him, the evil spirit which is tempting him to think that he belongs to that nature. He believes this witness which God has given of Himself in His Son, and therefore he has faith in God, faith in what He has done, faith

in what He is. He is justified from his sins only by this faith; for when he loses it, he can only think of himself as a separate, accursed creature, he can only act as if that were his condition. He is righteous only by this faith; for only by it does he claim any relation to Him who is righteous, only by it can he ascend out of his own nature. Having faith in God, he becomes a true man; otherwise, he possesses only the torments of a man with the instincts and pleasures of an animal.

III. Being justified by faith, we have *peace*. The nature of the blessing is understood by the process which leads to it. Peace is not something which a man holds, and can say, It belongs to me. The poor Augustinian monk was always fancying he should be able to catch it and appropriate it: the more he tried to do so, the further it fled from him. He found all his contrivances for procuring it increased the war within him; they always reminded him of himself, and himself was his enemy. If he forgot his misery for a moment, it was when he forgot himself. Where could he learn the secret of forgetting himself perpetually? If that were possible, there might be peace. But could he lose self-consciousness except in death? Alas! could he lose it in death? Would not death be rather the loss of those things which kept him diverted; which soothed him, as the ocean nymphs soothed Prometheus on his rock with their beautiful forms, and sweet melodies, and gentle sympathy?

Would not the time come when he should be left by himself, with only the vulture to feed upon him? Yes, Peace in Death he could not dream of. What he carried about him was Death; what he cried to be delivered from was Death. Peace must come by rising into life. And here it was. Being justified by faith; having his trust, his hope, his life in another; the war was over; the cause of it was removed. He was no more struggling to make himself something which he could not be; he was no more twining ropes of sand at the bidding of a demon; he could give up thinking about himself, trusting himself to God; he could give up planning and plotting how he might please God; knowing that self-willed rebellious efforts can never please Him; that the only way of pleasing a Father is by compliance and submission, by believing that He is perfectly gracious to us, and asking Him to make us like Himself. To suppose that this Peace is something won by a certain momentary act of belief, and thenceforth guaranteed to the believer as his treasure and property, is to subvert this whole doctrine.

No doubt the discovery that "God is not an oppressor, not one who seeks to condemn us, but to justify us," may burst all at once upon a man's mind, and may transport him into a joy passing anything he ever dreamed of. The shame and humiliation for having doubted the love of such a Being, and for having been estranged from Him, may mingle with this joy, deepening and softening, not diminishing it. The

union of the two may be rightly and happily denoted by that word Conversion, which both Romanist and Protestant divines have adopted from the Bible. A more complete revolution in the purpose and tenour of a man's inward existence cannot be conceived than that which takes place when he has been taught that the object of his greatest dread is the refuge and high tower to which he may always fly for protection. But such a Conversion implies that the man has turned round to a Friend from whom he was turning away; that he has ceased to boast of any spiritual quality of his own; that he has acknowledged all human qualities to be only reflections of some one which has its ground in God, and is exhibited perfectly in the Divine Mediator. If, therefore, under pretence of being a believer, he claims to have a certain quality or possession which distinguishes him from other people, he is denying the only meaning of belief and faith; he is re-establishing that self-righteousness which he professes to have abandoned, and his external life as much as his internal will continually testify to the delusion which he is practising upon himself. All earnest teachers and preachers of Justification by faith, all men who have shown that these words expressed to them a reality, have confessed that peace, instead of being a gift which they had acquired in virtue of their conversion, their belief or anything else, was theirs only when they abjured all thought of acquisition or distinction. They have confessed that they were conti-

nually forgetting the ground of their trust and confidence, continually sinking back into selfishness and self-will, and that they had need continually to be reminded by sharp warnings, which did not the less bear the stamp of the loving Parent who sent them because they were sharp, that they could have no other peace, save that which every man in the world may have who discovers God's will to be good, and therefore ceases to strive with it. The peace therefore in the text, as the peace which is needed and craved for in actual life, is peace with God. There cannot be an abstract peace. It must be between some parties who have some natural affinity and relationship. Here, in this earth, it generally refers to the ceasing of hostility between some parties who have been unnaturally opposed. Peace with God must signify the reconciliation of a man with a Being who has cast off him, or with a Being whom he has cast off. Which of the two it implies, the Bible and all this Epistle to the Romans is written to explain. A man supposes that God has cast off him, and that, in some way or other, he must seek to win back His favour. The Bible says that man has cast off God, and that God is seeking to bring him into union with Himself. All other differences lie in this one. The deliverance from the leaven of malice and wickedness for which we have prayed today is not the fruit of that faith which glorifies itself, which induces us to treat other men as unbelievers. More malice and wickedness have

flowed and are flowing from that self-glorifying faith than from any other source whatsoever. It is the leaven of hypocrisy, of which we have most need to beware. The service of God in pureness of living and truth does not flow from that self-glorifying faith. It is fatal to the service of God. Just because He is pure and is true, we cannot serve Him while we are nursing that faith. It makes us shrink from His purity; it makes us look upon Christ as one who is to hide us from His Truth, instead of being the Image of His Truth, who brings us into it.

IV. And so we are brought to the last words of the text, "Through Jesus Christ our Lord." The great question which every man asks is, How can I myself be at peace with God? He feels that whatever is told him about the world at large, he must have this answered in some way which shall meet his own individual case; which shall explain what he actually knows of his own condition; which should be applicable to him if he were left alone in creation. It is a strange demand; a demand which divines often set at naught, as if it were a monstrous one. They would throw us back upon generalities. But there is no shrinking from it. Each man does stand out in awful distinctness; he says, "I, even I, must stand face to face with Eternity, with God; tell me how I can do it." The answer St. Paul makes is, "God has made peace with thee, through Jesus Christ. In Him He has manifested to thee what He is; in

Him He sees thee. Thou mayest see God in him; thou mayest rise thyself to be a new creature in Him. For thou art not what thou supposest thyself to be, a separate atom in the universe; a creature who has no relation to any other. Thou hast wonderful affinities with all these beings about thee; and when thou art driven by thy wretchedness and despair of thyself to trust in Him who has taken thy nature upon Him, thou wilt find out that secret as well as the secret of thy own emancipation."

I have a right to say so, for we have not exhausted the Gospel of Christ when we have preached this great and comfortable doctrine of the justification of the individual conscience. There is a Catholic side of the Gospel as well as a Protestant; a side that has reference to Society as well as one that concerns each of us. We Englishmen are bound to recognize both. The circumstances of this age demand that we should encounter the social question at least as much as the personal one. But we shall not do justice to the one truth if we let go the other. We shall not make that stronger by weakening this. We want each in its fullest strength, in our daily battles with ourselves. We want both, that we may be freed from the leaven of malice and wickedness. We want both, that we may have full peace with God, and with our fellow-men, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Second Sunday after Easter.

April 26, 1857.

COLOSSIANS III. 15.

"AND LET THE PEACE OF GOD RULE IN YOUR HEARTS, TO THE WHICH ALSO YE ARE CALLED IN ONE BODY."

JUSTIFICATION was the subject of the Collect for the First Sunday after Easter: Christ's Sacrifice is the subject of the Collect for today. Both are connected with the Resurrection; both are connected with human life and morality. The first directly concerns the peace of the individual conscience; the other concerns directly the peace to which we have been called in one body. They ought not to be confounded; they cannot be separated. To merge Justification in Sacrifice, is the error of the Romanist; to merge Sacrifice in Justification, is the error of the Protestant. The first makes that which has been done for the whole family a hindrance to the faith of the distinct man, the member of the family; the last makes the satisfaction which a man receives respecting himself, the measure of what has been done for all. Each, I conceive, has to a great extent failed of

his own object by overlooking the other. The Romanist has been obliged to provide comforts to the individual conscience which have destroyed the universal character he glories in; the Protestant has been obliged to meet the social craving by expedients which have made his promise of peace to the *man* insincere and abortive.

I spoke last week of the way in which the Protestant truth of Justification by Faith asserted itself in the hearts of men who were brought up in the midst of a society which they believed to be Catholic and Divine. They had done what their system enjoined them to do; they *thought* they believed what their system enjoined them to believe. Their acts and their belief alike drove them to despair. A sense of unrighteousness was awakened in them by their efforts to become righteous. Their professions of a completed salvation drove them to ask, "How are *we* saved from this enmity to God,—this perdition in which we find ourselves?" The doctors could make no answer to this demand. The Creed made a wonderful answer. They were to believe in the forgiveness of sins: they were to believe in Christ, the Forgiver. They *did* believe in Him, and rose up new men. The burden of death fell off; they were partakers of a nobler life. They were freed from the guilt, which had prompted all superstitious contrivances; which had hindered all godly thankfulness, and all manly obedience. They could serve

God as a reconciled Father in pureness of living and truth.

These were the experiences of the sixteenth century; are they not good for the nineteenth? I maintained that they were, and that we are essentially the same men as our fathers were; that we have committed sins as they did; that the sense of evil is as real in us as it was in them; that the emancipation must come to us from the same Faith in God the Justifier; that Christ's resurrection is the witness of this Justification now, as it was then. Those who look down with contempt upon the Reformers for that which they passed through, must also look with contempt upon St. Paul for that which he passed through. They must look with contempt upon that which is deepest and truest in themselves; they must look with contempt upon that to which Europe is indebted for not being utterly immoral, utterly atheistical.

But I dare not deny that there are other experiences which we can as little gainsay, and which are forcing themselves more directly upon our notice. Men and women who have been brought up in a Protestant atmosphere, who from their childhood have been taught that it is Faith which saves the soul, who have regarded with traditional horror the church which they suppose denied this doctrine in past time, and denies it now, who have looked upon that church as the enemy of the Bible, as tyrannical, as idolatrous,—men and women with all these

feelings and prepossessions, have begun first to utter murmurs, not loud but deep, that they cannot gain peace of conscience by that belief which is said to secure it; then to express open suspicions that that peace is only promised to "one body," as my text says; then to ask with doubt, which soon passes into indignant disaffection, whether we, with all our divisions, uncertainties about doctrine, absence of authoritative decrees, can belong to that body; then to wonder at the grandeur of the Latin Church, with its long prescription, its strange coherency, its mighty influence, its grand ceremonial, its roll of saints, its confessional for special transgressions, its exhibition of a continual sacrifice for the universe; then, finally, to affirm that all these phenomena can only be explained by the recognition of a common centre of light and wisdom in Rome, and that no blessings, individual or national, which we have lost, can be restored to us till we confess that same centre, and bring all our different systems to revolve about it.

You cannot be ignorant that feelings of this kind have been awake for many years, and are still awake amongst us; that they are to be found in minds of the most various complexion and character; that they affect some who are imaginative, almost as many who are severely logical; that they appear quite as often in the sceptical as in the credulous; that they mingle with the characteristics of an age which we should pronounce most hostile to them; that if you see

reason for connecting them today with vanity, mawkishness, affectation, you may be startled tomorrow by discovering them in conjunction with earnestness, humility, self-sacrifice; that at all events they are producing the most serious consequences upon those who are impressed by them and upon those who are revolted by them; that they cannot be overlooked by any who care for the peace of men's hearts, of families, of English society, of Christendom.

Not overlooked certainly; but how are they to be dealt with? Should we endeavour to stifle them? Should we solemnly denounce them? Should we turn them into ridicule? Should we seek for some half concessions which may content them? Should we divert them with playthings? All these methods have been tried. Numbers are still trying them. I believe they will fail just as completely as the similar methods failed which were used in the sixteenth century to put down the thoughts which were then convulsing the spirits of men and threatening to convulse society. There were strong motives at that time for resorting to one or another of these experiments; motives which acted as powerfully upon good patriots, like Sir Thomas More, as upon arrogant doctors and papal nepotists. Might not all old sympathies and affections be shaken and dissolved by these doubts and anxieties? Might not thousands be loosened from their moorings, and be driven about in a wide sea without chart or compass? Were not a number

of the objections that were raised against the existing system untenable? Were not a number of the objectors frivolous and insincere? What more natural than to conclude—"The best course is to persuade those who can be persuaded to contentment; to give the half-sincere something that will look like a satisfaction of their cravings; to crush those who will not restrain their complaints, and who will accept no palliatives, with the arm of power."

Weak reasoning all, and poor philosophy! It could not be. Those who took any of these courses were fighting, not against men, but against God. He had awakened the cries for justification and peace in men's consciences. He only could meet them. They might be disturbing to the church, or to the schools, or to the nations; nevertheless, no popes, no doctors, no kings could put them down. For, in truth, neither the church, nor the schools, nor the nations, could have gone on without them: infidelity would have extinguished the church; all earnest thought would have perished in the schools; the vulgarest policy of statesmen would have quenched the life of the nations, if a peace which was no peace could have been secured by the acts of any of the three, or of all together.

Why should it be otherwise now? Why may not the thoughts respecting a Universal Church, which we sometimes regard as pregnant with rebellion,—sometimes as perilous to freedom,—be the very instruments which God is using for leading us to a higher

obedience, to a diviner liberty? Why should it be less dangerous to represent these longings as fantastical or Utopian than those? Why may it not be our duty, our interest, that we ourselves and that our brethren should understand thoroughly what this thirst in their hearts signifies, what contentment God has provided for it, so that we may not seek to slake it at any earthly fountains, which give forth waters not of life but of death?

There are some stock arguments, some favourite explanations, which we often resort to as means of curing the prevalent habit of mind, and which only show, I fear, our incapacity of understanding it, and our readiness to imitate the pious frauds of Romanism in our assaults upon it. Such, for instance, is the common statement, that there have been in all ages protesters against the evils of the visible Church, that these constituted the real spiritual Church, that so God's promises of never letting it perish have been accomplished. The mere statement is unquestionably true. There have been evils in the Church always; there have been men to testify against them: those men have shown that they were believing in an invisible Being, and trusting in His might; that they were receiving all outward forms and institutions only as tokens of His presence. But you cannot say so much without saying more. You must tell us what the nature of the protest was which they bore; whether it intimated that they alone were possessors

of certain spiritual privileges, or whether it affirmed that the men whom they addressed were sharers of those privileges, and were sinful for not using them. If it was of the former kind, one does not exactly see its reasonableness, nor who could listen to it. If it was of the latter, which would make it of the same kind as the protests in the Old and New Testament against the sins of kings and priests, and of Scribes and Pharisees, then it implied that there *was* a Church existing at that day, a Church still possessing an invisible foundation and invisible treasures. If so, what have you gained by putting this fact so prominently forward, and trying to make all ecclesiastical history merely the echo of it? The inquirer still demands—"What then is this body, with its sacraments, and its spiritual powers and energies, which I read of? Is it not the very one which these righteous and true men spake of, which they said God had established, and which men were treating as if it were only an earthly machine for advancing their fortunes, an earthly organization which they might turn to the most earthly purposes?"

For the same reason, we are not touching the heart of this question at all, when we are producing arguments to show the great corruptions of the church in the Middle Ages or in any other age. No doubt the facts ought to be stated exactly as they are, with no effort to heighten or abate their colouring, precisely as we would state any facts in the ancient history of

Rome or Greece. No doubt it is right that all instances of baseness and corruption should be produced, as a set-off to fantastic and one-sided pictures of Arcadian innocence or transcendent heroism. But we must not delude ourselves with the notion that we have established any great truth, or corrected any radical falsehood, by this array of proofs. There were gross corruptions in the French or Italian Church of the twelfth or fourteenth century. But if we may believe St. Paul, there were gross and scandalous corruptions, corruptions of life as well as of doctrine, in the Corinthian and Galatian Churches of the first century. We may think that the later evil was much greater than the earlier. Most likely it was, though we have not been made judges of that point. But admit corruption, to any extent or degree, in bodies which the Apostle describes as elect, called, sanctified; and unless you are determined to make those divine and inspired words meet some theory of yours, and that they shall not signify what they seem to signify, you must acknowledge that a holy body can continue to exist, though a multitude of its members commit acts which are most unholy. And remember, that if you are fond of facts, you can also be encountered with facts; that it can be shown that every experiment to make bodies holy by cutting off the supposed holy portions from the rest, has proved the more unsuccessful and abortive, the more consistently and perseveringly it has been pursued.

But if these are arguments which we must cease to trust because they have been found ineffectual, we can depend still less upon the feeble efforts which some have made to appease the cravings of men for a universal and united Church, by introducing a more brilliant ceremonial, or an appearance of uniformity to which there is no corresponding substance.

It is no doubt rash and foolish to dogmatize respecting the degree in which spiritual worship may be assisted or retarded by appeals to the senses. Much must depend upon national or individual temperaments. There is scope for the exercise of charity and forbearance, in enduring any habits to which we have not been accustomed, and which we suspect of excess or defect; there is scope for the exercise of self-denial and spiritual prudence, in surrendering that which we prize, or adopting that which we dislike, for the sake of a brother's conscience. If we are possessed by spiritual truths, we shall no doubt discover at last the most suitable methods of expressing them through the forms of the sensible world. What I say is, that such forms, let their worth or utility be what they may, never can afford the least contentment to a spirit really exercised by these doubts to which I have been referring. They may embrace them even greedily for awhile; soon, they will sicken of what will appear to them the embalming and dressing out of a dead body; they will say that we are naturalizing symbols which are precious in other countries on account of

the truth which is embodied in them; that what we want is this truth itself; that we have lost, not the forms which denote the sacrifice, but the sacrifice itself; that we never can recover uniformity till we have the unity which it betokens; nay, that if we had the one, we might perhaps bear some deviations from the other. These are very great and grave statements, depending comparatively little for their effect upon the rhetorical ingenuity with which they are sometimes put forward, or upon the bitter scorn with which those who produce them treat their own past states of mind and the friends in whom they still discover traces of them. The rhetoric we need not fear; the scorn we may regret more for the sake of those who indulge it than of those who are the objects of it; but the testimony to what we need, the appeals to our consciousness of evil, we cannot pass over: these we are bound earnestly and gratefully to heed and to profit by.

1. We want, it is said, a Church of God, and not one of Man. Yes, that is our want, the want of us Englishmen, the want of people everywhere. We have believed, whatever we may have talked to the contrary, in a Church built on some human foundation, resting on some human authority, supported by some name or notion. And it will not do. We feel it will not. We find that there is no peace for us while we are trying to stand on this ground, no peace with each other, no peace in our own consciences. We must

have a Church resting in the Name of God and in no other.

2. It is said, this Church must be one and indivisible. Certainly it must. If it stands on the Name of God, and not on some ground of ours; if Christ the Son of God is the foundation and corner-stone of it; then it is one, eternally, absolutely, necessarily one. Nothing can separate it. No powers of hell can prevail against it.

3. But such a Church, you say, actually exists. It existed in the first ages; it existed in the Middle Ages; it existed before the Reformation, and at the Reformation; it exists still. Most assuredly. No doctrine is so consolatory, so delightful, and I will add, so entirely in accordance with fact and with our ordinary language, the language which we all adopt when we are not theorizing. There was this Church, there had been this Church ever since the Gospel was preached. The forms and creeds which existed in every part of Europe testified of such a Church, a Church of which Latins, Greeks, bond and free, were all equally members.

4. But a Church which is one and indivisible must have an infallible guide. Certainly, no other can possibly avail. "Yes, but not an infallible book; an infallible *Person*." Even so. If Christ Himself is not with His Church, is not the guide of it, no book can avail it anything at all, no minister can avail it anything at all. If His guidance is only an imaginary

guidance, and not a real one; if His guidance is not precisely that which we all crave for, a guidance of the Reason, the Will, the thoughts and instincts of our hearts, which no other can know or can look into, the idea of a Church is a dream. And it is no less a dream that there has been any human thought, any human literature. We have a common life, a common mind, because there is One Living Word who is the Head and Teacher of us all. The universe is an incomprehensible enigma without Him.

5. "But a Church involves a Sacrifice, a Sacrifice that actually unites man to God, that actually takes away sin." Even so. I can conceive no other foundation for a Church than this. I cannot conceive how a Church can maintain fellowship among its members, or produce any sound Christian morals, which does not put forth a Divine Sacrifice as at the root of all human life; as the spring of all human action.

6. "And this Sacrifice ought to involve a universal Communion among men of all kindreds and ages, a Communion of quick and dead." Surely, the New Testament affirms it. It says that we are come to an innumerable company of Angels, to the Spirits of just men made perfect, to God the Judge of all, to Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament, to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel. Can there be loftier language? Must not the Communion of the body and blood of Christ mean this or nothing?

7. "But besides this, there must be in the Church a power to absolve the consciences of men." What else does the Church exist for, so far as men are concerned, but to absolve or set free their consciences from the chains with which they are bound? What greater negligence can it be charged with than that of not performing this office? What greater sin than that of forging chains instead of breaking them?

I have gone through what I believe are the principal allegations respecting a Church, which we are wont to hear. I have admitted the truth and the virtue of them all. And I do not utter this as a lazy admission. I say all these assertions ought to frighten us; to make us ashamed; to bring us to repentance before God. For it is not a false charge, but one thoroughly merited and established, that we have forgotten these characteristics of a Church,—not one of them, but all of them; that we have lived and acted as if there was no body to which they belonged; that we have built many of our arguments upon the denial that such a body is possible. I say we are bound solemnly to make this confession; that in fact every prayer we offer to God should be a renewal of the confession. But what confession? Is it that we are not yet members of such a Church? That we may bring ourselves into such a community by committing a certain act of separation from the one which is set up in our land? No, verily. That would be an easy, pleasant, self-justifying confession. It must

be a much more humiliating one than that. It must be the acknowledgment that we are actual members incorporate of such a catholic, holy, united Society, under such infallible guidance, resting upon such an atoning sacrifice, demanding such a daily sacrifice of ourselves, implying such a communion with all in earth and heaven, holding forth such an emancipation to our own consciences, and to the consciences of our brethren; and that we have been shut up in our narrow selves, following our own guidance, or the guidance of some feeble fellow-creature, practically acknowledging no atonement between earth and Heaven, with fettered, guilty consciences, doing nothing to break the yoke from the necks of our brethren. And what fruit should be meet for such confession and repentance? Shall it be our acknowledgment of the Roman Bishop as centre of the Church? Again I say, no; if it is to be a Universal Church, then we dare not narrow it to his dimensions; we cannot circumscribe it by his Latin rules. If it is to be under infallible direction, we cannot submit it to his fallible direction. If it is to be based upon a universal Sacrifice made once for all, we cannot rest it on his notion of an incomplete Sacrifice, which priests on earth are to make perfect. If we are to be assertors of freedom of conscience, we cannot yield to one who exists to enslave the conscience. But this *will* be a true fruit of such Confession and Repentance. We may bid all men of all nations and Churches claim

the liberty with which Christ has made them free; the full unity which they have in Him their ascended Lord and Head; the perfect Communion which they may all have in His Sacrifice. This will be our duty and reward, to tell ourselves and to tell all men that we are called to Peace in one body, and therefore that we may let that Peace, the Peace of Christ, rule in all our hearts.

Third Sunday after Easter.

May 3, 1857.

REVELATION III. 3.

"REMEMBER THEREFORE HOW THOU HAST RECEIVED AND HEARD, AND HOLD FAST, AND REPENT."

I SPOKE, two Sundays ago, on the strength of the Protestant principle. I spoke last Sunday on the strength of the Catholic principle. What was the first? If we took the leader of the German Reformation as our standard for judging of it,—and we were bound to do so, seeing that he received it through the greatest conflicts of mind, and that no teacher has exercised so great an influence in his own day and ever since,—Protestantism signified a demand of the individual Conscience for peace and reconciliation with God; a demand for deliverance from all internal accusations, from all outward arrangements or decrees, which interfered with the attainment of that reconciliation, and with the regulation of the whole life and conduct upon the basis of it. "God hath justified me a sinner, hath made peace with me. No doctors, no ecclesiastical authority, no fears of my own heart, no

recollection of past evil, no sense of present evil, no conspiracy of the powers of darkness in the invisible world, shall take that peace or justification from me. I may believe in God the Justifier, in opposition to all these. I *must* believe, or I have no ground to stand upon: I sink into sin, death, hell, if I do not." This was Luther's proclamation; this is living Protestantism. By its own nature it repels dilutions, refinements, the skilful phrase-turning of the dialectician, the good-natured *irenicum* of the statesman: all reason would convince us that it must; its whole history proves that it does. These experiments, in every possible variety, in the most skilful hands, with the mightiest motives of interest, of affection, apparently of charity, to favour their success, failed utterly at the time of the Reformation, and have failed every time when they were needed to quell actual feelings, energetic purposes since. They pleased those who did not feel the battle to be one of life and death, who only wanted an excuse for indolence and indifference; the rest clung to their convictions, and cast the compromises to the winds.

How was it in the other case? We had no need to throw ourselves back into a distant age, or to study the circumstances of some foreign land, before we answered the question. Here, among ourselves, are cries for Catholic unity, Catholic guidance, Catholic absolution, Catholic sacrifice, Catholic sympathy with departed saints, Catholic hopes for those who are not

saints. These cries, though mixed with much vanity, much uncertainty of purpose, alternations of weakness and violence, no contempt or denunciation can put down. Mere external tokens of recognition, mere plausible concessions, if accepted with a show of gratitude one moment, are cast aside with indignation the next. To obtain what looks like a satisfaction of these cravings, men are found willing to make sacrifices of self-interest, of personal affection, of traditionary sympathy. Nay, the half-believed promise that there is a Church in which they may find what they are seeking, tempts numbers to accept dogmas which they hope they may be able one day not to regard as false and dangerous. You may say that the sixteenth century was a time of religious excitement, of strong belief, of intense exclusiveness; but here, in the nineteenth century, in a time of devotion to mechanical and mercantile pursuits, of weak belief, of desire for comprehension, you are encountered with tendencies which will as little submit to any balancing or eclectical treatment as those which are apparently most opposed to them.

Such a conclusion sounds very disheartening; especially disheartening to members of the English Church. For a large section of our divines has always been of opinion that we were meant to occupy the position which upon this showing must be untenable. And this has not only been a theory of theologians, which they have been able to vindicate by much strong evi-

dence deduced from the history of our Reformation, and indeed of our ecclesiastical polity from its very commencement until now. It has also been favoured by the instincts and habits of the English character, by that deeply-grounded feeling, which has given to your profession so much of its peculiar worth as well as of its peculiar danger, that there is something to be said for each party in a dispute; that the right is not, strictly speaking, in either, but in a judgment which results from a comparison of them both. This national temper certainly *looks* favourable to compromises. For a long time it *does* favour them; but as it is essentially a practical temper, scornful of that which has only a paper existence, eager for positive results, it soon wearies of whatever it finds utterly inoperative to bring human beings into concord. And then it listens with open ears to those who explain why the Church of our fathers cannot do what it makes pretence of doing. "The Protestant," say the English sects (and this single word they speak almost with one breath), "has an intelligible position. He confesses our right to judge for ourselves. The Roman Catholic has an intelligible position. He takes that right away altogether, exacts unlimited submission. *You* have no position at all. You plead for the rights of free-thinking against Romanists. You insist upon the right of the Church to decree what should be thought against Protestants. And the reason is plain. If you would merely acknowledge your-

selves a sect or religious body, holding the right of Bishops to rule your Society, you would be standing on the same level with us all; you would be claiming the same privileges with us. But you are a State-Church, asserting certain rights which set you above all other sects. You do not like to say that these rights came to you by mere earthly decrees, by Acts of Parliament. You cling therefore to the ideas of prescription and authority which belong to the Romanists, and which condemn your separation from them." I state as briefly as I can arguments which, as you know, are susceptible of innumerable variations, and which are illustrated by appeals to the experience of all countries where the State does or does not recognize a Church.

These opinions are supported by a class of reasoners who have very little sympathy with the maxims upon which Nonconformists plead for them. The so-called men of progress say: "Naked Protestantism has a tendency to advance. It has shaken off the fetters which hung about the mind of Luther. The Bible is no longer its watchword; justification by faith means something quite different in the nineteenth century from what it meant in the sixteenth. Naked Catholicism, on the other hand, suggests a number of thoughts respecting a comprehensive Humanity. At times it fraternizes with Democracy, becomes almost interchangeable with it. But for soldiers and sovereigns, the thoughts pent up within the Church would be

found too strong for its forms and creeds: no doubt one day these will be torn in pieces in most Romish countries, just as the antiquated symbols of Protestantism are giving way in the countries which it has ruled. In both these systems then there is hope. But your Church is simply obstructive. It keeps up the old faith of Protestantism in the dignity of the Bible, in the dogma of justification. It keeps up the notion of a Church which is to guide the thoughts of men and the movements of the world; though it evinces every day more and more clearly its incapacity for that work."

This charge of incapacity enlists on the same side the sympathy of a third class,—those, I mean, who do not care much for religious controversies or philosophical projects, but whose minds are fixed on the physical and moral wretchedness of our people. The contrast between the material treasures we possess, still more between the spiritual powers we talk of, and the condition of those for the sake of whom both have been bestowed, leads them to exclaim in bitterness: "We should not ask you what you call yourselves, Protestant or Catholic, if you were but doing something to remove the abominations, to renovate the society around you. Whatever body can and will do that has the signs and credentials which we recognize as belonging to a Church. But one which is perpetually arguing about her right to exist and her right to be obeyed, does not impress us with any

reverence, does not make us willing to acknowledge powers which seem as if they were scarcely believed in by those who boast of them. A real ship breasting real waves is a goodly spectacle; but 'a painted ship upon a painted ocean,' what worth lies in that?"

The persons who upon these different grounds condemn our position as either utterly false or at best as precarious and tottering, are energetic, thoughtful, often benevolent; what shall I say of those who defend it? Are they equally in earnest? Do they know what they are lauding and patronizing? Do they care for it? Is the Church as dear to them as their party or their club? Do they look for any help or guidance from it? Do not they think that it is by some magic to keep the public at large in order, and to let *them* do much what they like? I am sure that there are many who could answer these questions fearlessly and honestly; I am sure that there is, in the hearts of us all, something much deeper than our words express: else surely those words should make us shudder. How much more gladly should we listen to the bitterest rebukes, or the most unsupported calumnies, that show a sense of the standard at which clergymen ought to aim, and a feeling that the Church is a common heritage and refuge, than to compliments and apologies which signify, if they signify anything, that evil is part of God's order, and that He has established His Church for the purpose of checking any interference with its sacred and vested privileges! And

most of all is that tone of speaking dangerous and disgraceful to us, which appears to indicate that our condition is most safe when we can keep the elements of which our body politic consists, the Protestant and the Catholic, feeble, each balancing and counteracting the other; whereas in very deed we need them both in their fullest vitality, in their utmost concentration, that we may accomplish the tasks which have been committed to us, that we may not utterly lose what we have inherited, that we may not cease at once to be a Nation and a Church.

Therefore I have taken this afternoon the words which were once addressed to the Church of Sardis. That Church is spoken of as one of seven. The writer of the Apocalypse is living amongst them; they know him as the beloved disciple, as the last apostle. But he does not claim any authority over them. He tells them of one living centre, the High Priest of the whole family, the source of illumination to each portion of the family and to its teacher. Christ Himself speaks to each Church. He warns it of its dangers, its characteristic temptations. He awakens it to think of the powers with which it has been entrusted; of its own special work and calling. He says that in overcoming its own temptations, in fulfilling its own work, it may enter into fellowship with the whole society to which it is united, with Him the elder brother of that society, with the Father of all. He assures them of His Presence and His divine power.

When, as in the case of this church of Sardis, He has seen feebleness, despondency, heartlessness, He foretells whither these are leading, He calls to repentance. If the whole Gospel is not an idle tale, what was true in the first century is true now. The Son of God and of Man—He that was dead and is alive—is the centre of all the portions into which the Church by the arrangements of His providence is divided. Upon the acknowledgment of His presence their unity depends; and to each portion of it He is speaking some words of strength, of warning, of consolation. Are not these the words which He is speaking to the Church of England: "Remember how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent"?

I. *How* have we received and heard? We have a sense of something different in our position from that of other Churches. We sometimes boast of the difference; we are sometimes ashamed of it; but we all feel that it is a fact. We cannot rid ourselves of the fact. We cannot rid ourselves of the responsibility which the fact lays upon us. It is true that we received the Reformation in the sixteenth century. It is true also that England did not pass through that crisis in the same way as any Church on the Continent, whether it continued obedient to the Pope or threw off his yoke, passed through the same crisis. There was the same ardent craving awake in the consciences of men for justification and

peace. There was the same impossibility of quenching that craving by any acts of divines or politicians. Nevertheless we all feel and confess that the English Sovereigns had a direct positive share in the work; that the movement received its direction from them. It was therefore more distinctly national. The emancipation of the King from the Pope was its maxim and its obvious result. The acquisition of a Bible in the language of the nation, of Common Prayers in the language of the nation, was the consequence of this change. These were the signs and pledges of Reformation. With them came other more doubtful signs, such as the dissolution of the monasteries; wherein one discovers the clearest indication of the national feeling in favour of a practical, domestic life, against a religious life, which is inconsistent with that; wherein we discover also the fatal belief in the upper classes that wealth which was needed for the Nation, might be fairly seized for the aggrandisement of individuals.

Let all these things be remembered for us and against us. We did receive the Reformation under these conditions of good and evil. We had heard the Gospel itself, we had received the message concerning a Church long before, under conditions different, no doubt, from these, yet not altogether different. At the very first it was a Gospel to the nation through the Kings; at the very first it associated itself with domestic life, with the Anglo-Saxon reverence for

women. From the first it was a message concerning a divine kingdom set up in the land, not concerning certain notions or opinions. From the first our people showed themselves far from profound in controversy, but exceedingly vigorous in action: valuing thought for its results in life; able to appreciate a ruler much better than a dogmatist; demanding of a ruler that he should treat them as men, not as things. They clung to the past with reverence, only discarding its traditions, and these reluctantly, when they interfered with the business of the present. They exhibited a vehement feeling of individual existence which might easily become gross selfishness. But they exhibited also a national feeling which was sometimes exclusive and contemptuous, but which was associated with courage, manliness, godliness. It was the inevitable result of this character and of these circumstances that the order of our society was preserved amidst all dangers in its waking. Bishops lasted on as well as kings: both were connected with the life of the nation. The Bible was received as a national book, interpreting to us our relations to the King whom David and Isaiah spoke of; teaching us the method of His government over England and of His punishment of her sins. The Prayer Book too was national, though it could not be exclusively national. It came from Greek and Latin sources; its petitions had been poured forth by men who never heard our tongue or who lived when we were pagans.

Still it bound together our classes; the rich and poor in our land joined in the same praises and songs. All had a right to call God their Father in Christ, of whose body they were members; all had a right to say they were fellow-citizens in a heavenly kingdom.

II. These things we have to remember. Are they these also which we have to hold fast? That is my strong belief. I think that if we part with any of these things, or if we retain them with feeble, trembling hands, we cannot execute our own special trust, we cannot do justice to those parties into which our land is divided,—we cannot establish any solid reconciliation between them,—we cannot unite their forces against the enemies which are destroying us,—we cannot point out a way of peace to Romanists and Protestants abroad. I say this even in the cases where I am most reluctant to say it. That claim to be a State Church,—to hold a position which is different from the position of men who are not worse than ourselves in any respect,—how often one is inclined to be ashamed of it and to abandon it! How one blushes when it is put forward as a plea for boasting or for contempt! How often it seems as if we should do more justice to the strength of our cause if we could deprive it of all apparent and extraneous advantage! But if this position,—to whatever we are indebted for it,—however worthless it may be in itself,—however we may have abused it,—enables us to say to our fellow-countrymen and brethren, "We

will not submit to be called an episcopalian sect, because we do not want you to consider yourselves as sects. We want you to feel that you are members of a Church, members of Christ, and children of God. And we will rather undergo the humiliation, for such it is, of seeming to rest our cause upon accidents upon which we know in our consciences that we do not rest it, than throw ourselves even from the most insignificant eminence, from the most insecure pinnacle, at the risk of making you think that we are defending a theory or an opinion of ours, not contending for a great social truth in which you, as much as we, are interested;"—so long as it pleases God, therefore, not to show by some manifest tokens that He removes us from this position, I think we are bound by our allegiance to Christ to hold it fast.

With more confidence and earnestness I would hold fast those prayers, those creeds, that catechism, which the men of progress tell us that we must sacrifice to the interests of a general Humanity. For the sake of that general Humanity,—because I believe it is in danger of being utterly trampled upon, or of becoming a trumpery name which has no reality answering to it,—I would keep these treasures, which have been entrusted to us. I can believe in a general, in a universal Humanity, while I believe in Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified dead and buried, descended into Hell, rose again the third day, sitteth

at the right hand of God, and shall come again to judge the quick and dead. I can assert that Humanity in the very terms of the Creed, against those who would separate believers from the rest of human beings,—who would exalt the *sect* of Christians against the race which the Church of Christ, which Christ Himself represents. But if I am deprived of this faith, the word Humanity expresses either an ideal which has never been realized, or else a sentiment confined to a few fine people, or else the aggregate of all the sin and suffering which is scattered over the world.

Again: while we dare to hold fast the lessons of our Catechism, we can say to the Protestant, "We are very dull logicians. We cannot understand your nice distinctions about Faith and Justification. But we are members of Christ; we believe He died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. Do you wish us to have some other faith, some other justification, which is not in Christ? Because we do not intend to seek that other faith and justification. We intend to hold *this* fast, being assured that it is what you want as well as we." We can say to the Romanists, "We are children of God; we believe He has adopted us into this universal family in His Well-beloved Son, and that He has baptized us with His Spirit. Is not that the family to which you belong? Is not that the Spirit with which you are baptized? Because assuredly it is the family to which Bernard and Francis and Bonaventura belonged. They con-

fessed a Pope, as you do; but they *believed* in Christ. They claimed to be parts of His body; to be sons of His Father. And the Spirit which enabled them to look beyond themselves and beyond their own narrow opinions, and beyond their age,—the Spirit who united them and does unite them still to all countries and all ages,—that was the Spirit, not of the Pope, but of the Father and the Son; and while you and I seek that, we shall have a unity which no Pope ever gave to those who honoured him most, which those who put him in the place of God must consent to lose altogether."

Now, if the most resolute Protestant and the most resolute Catholic accept this justification and this unity, they can go in the might of the truths which they have learnt by their different and contradictory kinds of discipline,—in the might of the common truth which has bound them together,—to those who are perishing of inanition and luxury, to those who are perishing in the midst of toil, and sorrow, and neglect; and can call upon both to rise up as men, to cast away that which has robbed them of their personal manliness and freedom; to cast away that which has kept them from sympathy and co-operation with each other. They can tell both of their birthrights; they can make both good citizens of a soil which they regarded only as yielding them so much revenue, or as the warrant for so much repining; they can tell both of an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, which

is reserved for them at God's right-hand. And why should not the same witness in substance be borne to all the tribes over which England rules, or amongst which her sons have established themselves? Why should not they hear and receive from us the witness of a kingdom of righteousness and truth of which all kingdoms, so far as they exercise righteousness and truth, are the images; from which all that is good and strong in them is derived?

III. But He who said to the Church of Sardis, "Remember, and hold fast," said also "Repent." *We* cannot heed the first commandment unless we heed the last. I have been obliged to admit that the charges brought against us by all our opponents are true. We have made the unsectarian position which God has given us a plea for sectarianism. We have taken the Bible, not as the guide to our feet and the lamp to our path; the inspirer of thought; the awakener of the understanding as well as of the affections; the witness for all sound, manly, national morality; but as if it were a book of sentences, a book of death rather than of life. We have not rejoiced in our prayers, as common prayers which level us all before God; which help us to plead for all, and claim communion with all those who are furthest from us in opinion; which teach us to pray that God will have mercy upon all men; which carry us far beyond our own thoughts and conceptions, to the final triumph of good over evil. We have turned them into selfish

prayers; into excuses for self-glorification; into evidences of our difference from the rest of the world. We have not been valiant for God's truth; but vain of the clever contrivances by which you could convert it into a see-saw between opposing notions. We have therefore not been peace-makers, but exciters of strife and bitterness among those who would not abandon a partial belief for that which seems to them no belief at all. We have not made tradesmen and politicians understand that to cheat and lie is to destroy their own souls and the soul of the nation. We have not preached a gospel to the poor, but have made them think that Christ came to bind chains upon them rather than to set them free from chains. We have not made men who are worshiping cruel and false gods understand that we are sent into the world, by words and acts to testify of a God of Truth and a God of Love.

Nor must I forget that the warnings of Christ respecting sins committed and judgments to come, were addressed first of all to the angels of the Church. The ministers are treated as first in the evil; they are to expect that they will be first in punishment; they are called to be first in repentance for themselves and for all. The lesson must apply to our church and our age in this point also. How poor then and ineffectual must be any words of admonition or exhortation that proceed from us! How needful that you should learn, not what we say, but what the Spirit says to the

Churches! How impossible that any good could come to you, or to us, or to the land, if He who opens and no man shuts, and shuts and no man opens, in whose hand are the seven stars, out of whose mouth comes the two-edged sword, had not Himself been raised on high, to give repentance to Israel—repentance to England—and remission of all our sins!

Fourth Sunday after Easter.

May 10, 1857.

DEUTERONOMY IX. 26–29.

"I PRAYED THEREFORE UNTO THE LORD, AND SAID, O LORD GOD, DESTROY NOT THY PEOPLE AND THINE INHERITANCE, WHICH THOU HAST REDEEMED THROUGH THY GREATNESS, WHICH THOU HAST BROUGHT FORTH OUT OF EGYPT WITH A MIGHTY HAND. REMEMBER THY SERVANTS, ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB; LOOK NOT UNTO THE STUBBORNNESS OF THIS PEOPLE, NOR TO THEIR WICKEDNESS, NOR TO THEIR SIN: LEST THE LAND WHENCE THOU BROUGHEST US OUT SAY, BECAUSE THE LORD WAS NOT ABLE TO BRING THEM INTO THE LAND WHICH HE PROMISED THEM, AND BECAUSE HE HATED THEM, HE HATH BROUGHT THEM OUT TO SLAY THEM IN THE WILDERNESS. YET THEY ARE THY PEOPLE AND THINE INHERITANCE, WHICH THOU BROUGHTEST OUT BY THY MIGHTY POWER AND BY THY STRETCHED OUT ARM."

THIS prayer brings out in its greatest strength a contrast which goes through the Book of Deuteronomy, and through the whole Bible. The Israelites are the people of God, His inheritance, redeemed by His mighty hand. They are stubborn, stiff-necked, wicked. We become so familiar with passages which contain both these descriptions of them, that we often attach little meaning to either. When we begin to

study the history with real interest and for a practical purpose, the sins which are denounced become evident enough to us, from their likeness to those which are committed in our own day, or which we are conscious of in ourselves. But while we are dwelling upon them, how is it possible to think of the people to whom they are attributed, as righteous, holy, chosen out of all the people of the earth? These words acquire in our minds a sort of technical signification. The holiness which is said to belong to the Jewish nation cannot, we think, be the holiness which we ascribe to Moses, or Elijah, or Jeremiah. The word must have a different force in its different applications. We are afraid of believing that the language of the Divine Word is as strict and honest language as the language of fallible men. By tampering with it a little we hope to escape the peril of calling evil good and good evil.

The state of mind which such thoughts indicate cannot be a right one. A seed of insincerity lies in it, which must bear fruit hereafter in manifold contradictions, both of belief and conduct. It cannot be cured by stifling the doubts which it does and must engender. Those doubts will penetrate, before we are aware, into the innermost corners of our minds. So long as we have the least suspicion that Righteousness and Holiness are words of merely conventional force in the Bible, so long we shall not regard the Bible as a true book, whatever reverence we may seem to pay

it. We have therefore the greatest interest in seeking for a resolution of this difficulty, and in not glossing it over. You will see how nearly it lies to those questions which I have been occupied with lately. Last Sunday I was speaking of Christ's call to a Church to remember what it had received and heard, to hold fast, and to repent. I applied these words to the Nation and Church of England; I said that Christ was speaking them to us as much as to the Sardians. I said that if we heeded them we might perhaps bind different classes in our land together; that we might reconcile some of them who are most hostile to us, and who suspect us most abroad. We might appeal to the strongest feelings of Protestants as well as Romanists; we might make them fellow-workers instead of foes.

I did not disguise from myself then, that language of this kind would sound very unreal to some of those with whose faith and earnestness I should most wish to claim fellowship. "What," they will say, "do you mean by *national* righteousness, *national* repentance? *Individual* righteousness, *individual* repentance we know something of. There was a time in our lives when visible things had an unbounded attraction for us; when we regarded it as the highest end of life to obtain the largest share of them, or to draw the greatest amount of enjoyment from them. One of these charms after another was taken away from us, or proved itself to be hollow. Vacancy and dreariness

of spirit followed; then the vision of a higher good floated before us. We tried to grasp it and could not. There was revealed to us an evil in ourselves which till then had been hidden from us. We cried to be delivered from it. At length we perceived and knew that there was a Deliverer. We prayed thenceforth to be admitted into His household, if it were but as menials. We learned that He was far more willing to grant that petition than we were to make it."

These experimental records bear the clearest stamp of veracity. And they are as beautiful and consolatory as they are true. They explain great moral facts, as scientific discoveries explain physical facts. Those moral facts are just what we all want to understand; what some feel as if they would die to understand. But from them, it is supposed, we can deduce the nature of righteousness and repentance. Taking them as our starting-point, it is concluded that a righteous *society* will be one which contains a great number of these righteous penitents. "To deserve the name strictly and properly," it is said, "such a society should contain nothing else; but that is a result which the imagination grasps, which the heart craves for, but which we must be content to dispense with here,—a rude and very distant approximation to it ought to satisfy us. Something may be done to purge a society of its most outrageous members: the sword of a Nation will cut off a few; the discipline of

a Church should be desired for the removal of more; but, after all, those who stand in a direct personal relation with God,—those who are something more than externally decorous,—must remain an insignificant minority. The great comfort is, to think that, though of so little importance in the eyes of man, they attract all the Divine complacency; that in fact for their sakes the whole machinery of the Universe, the order of Nature, the policy of Nations, is suffered to exist; that in due time these will pass away, and the chosen Saints will be revealed, thenceforth the sole possessors of those blessings which the ungodly had for awhile been allowed to seize and appropriate."

That some of these conclusions respecting the ways of God to man sound at first revolting, and seem to clash with apprehensions of His character which we thought we had derived from Scripture, may be no reason for rejecting them, far less for denying the facts from which they have been deduced. But it would be a very serious objection to them, if they clashed with the principles and the method of the Book to which they appeal as an authority and a judge. I think a very little reflection will convince us that this is actually the case.

One all-important contrast suggests itself, the moment we open the Scriptures. They do not set forth the history of a man seeking for God, but of God seeking for men. In the Book of Exodus we have very distinct records of the life of Moses; but no

one could possibly think that it was the object of that Book to give us a biography of him or of any other man. Moses is called out by God to know His name and to do His work; that is the account which he gives of himself. This was his holiness: he was separated, set apart by God to act as His minister. He who set him apart revealed to him His character,—showed him that Righteousness, and not Self-Will, was governing the universe. He was called to exhibit this Righteousness to his countrymen and to Pharaoh; he was to tell them that God had seen their affliction and heard their cry; he was to command Pharaoh to let the people whom he was oppressing go. To separate Moses the righteous man from Moses the deliverer of the Israelites, is impossible. He could not have been righteous if he had not fulfilled that task,—he could not have been righteous if he had not testified in all his acts and words that God, not he, was the Deliverer. We miss the whole meaning of the story—the saintship of Moses disappears altogether—if we try to conceive of him apart from his people. Do you remind me that he was forty days in communion with the Lord God of Israel? But was he not in these forty days receiving the law, which was for every Israelite as much as for himself? was he not pleading for Israelites, as if there was not one privilege which they did not share with him?

This is the point upon which we were seeking light.

I apprehend that if we once see upon what ground the holiness of Moses stood, we must admit that the nation of which he was a member was holy, in precisely the same sense and for precisely the same reason as he was; nay, that it had a title prior to his, a title from which his own was derived. It was a holy nation, because God had called it out—had chosen it to be His—had put his name upon it. The Scriptures tell us so, and they explain to us what they mean. They never teach us that God created men to be a set of individuals. They say that He created everything after its kind; that He created man in His own image, the words being added, "Male and female created He them." No language can more distinctly express the idea of Society as essential to the very idea of Humanity than this. It is not the separate man who is in the image of God; it is man as a kind, it is the individual man so far as he is the member of a kind. The first man and woman, we are told, who were put into this world, refused to own themselves as made in God's image,—tried to be independent of Him; and therefore, by a necessary consequence, became suspicious of each other, as well as servants to an inferior creature. But the purpose of the Creator could not be defeated by the unbelief of the creature. They did increase and multiply according to the law and the blessings which He had originally given them; they became a society. In that society the fallen tendency

manifested itself. And if the Adam-nature could have made itself manifest,—if man could have seized the dreadful privilege of being left to himself,—that society would have perished; there must have been hopeless, endless strife, hostility, and hatred. But iniquity cannot make itself a law; men cannot cut themselves off from their unseen Lord, nor from their fellows. They feel and know that they cannot; all the acts of their lives—the words which they speak—testify that they cannot; the struggle to do it makes contradiction of their lives. How perfectly simple and orderly then is the Scripture narrative, how entirely consistent with itself, when it assumes God to be the author and upholder of social life; when it affirms all society to be irregular, incoherent, disorderly, so soon as it loses sight of Him.

The family of Abraham was signed with God's covenant, and was declared to be holy. Was it not so actually? Was it only so because Jacob was the head of it, or because Joseph was a member of it? The Scripture is careful to preserve us from any such feeble notions. It forces us to see that Joseph was better than his brethren just because he identified himself with the family, and they acted as if they did not belong to it; because he believed that God had chosen it, and they forgot that He had; because he did, and they did not, believe it to be holy.

The nation of Israel was told that the Invisible God was actually their King; that He had brought

them out of the house of bondage; that He was with them in the wilderness; that He would be with them in the promised land. Supposing any Israelite to believe this, he was a strong, brave, free man; he could overcome the enemies of his land; he could tread his own underfoot. Supposing him to lose this faith, he wished again for the flesh-pots of Egypt, he was without heart, hope, enterprise; he cried to the priest to set up a calf, because the Lord was not among them. Did the strength, bravery, freedom, come to one because he believed a lie? and the cowardice, slavery, idolatry to the other because he believed the truth? And yet so it must have been, if the first had not a right to call his nation a holy nation in the strict, full sense of the words; if he had not a right to say, "We are individually holy because we are members of it, and because God has given each of us the same privilege which He has given to the whole people, of calling Him our God, of knowing His name, of trusting in Him." Could the unbelief of five-sixths of the people make the truth of God of none effect? Could it make any, even the slightest, difference in the reality of the Divine Word and Promise, or serve for any other purpose than to demonstrate its truthfulness, by the untruthfulness of those who set it aside or were indifferent to it?

See then how reasonable the prayer was which I have taken for my text this afternoon. *Because* Moses regarded the Israelites as a holy and chosen

people, redeemed by God's own hand; *because* he believed that this description belonged to the whole covenant people at all times: *therefore* he felt with intense anguish their stubbornness, their wickedness, and their sin. Had they not been a holy people, he would not have known in what their sin consisted. It was the forgetfulness of their holy state—the choice of another—which he confessed with such shame and sorrow before God; it was because they had gone out of the right way, forgetting that they were a nation, each man preferring a selfish way of his own,—each thinking that he had an interest apart from his neighbour, apart from the body to which he belonged,—that they needed his intercession, and God's renewing and restoring mercy. And Moses could ask for that restoring mercy; he had the power to pray, because he was sure that he was asking according to God's will,—because he was sure that he was asking that that which resisted His will might be taken away. "Remember not, Lord, their wickedness, and their stubbornness, and their sin! All these have come from their unbelief in Thy love and mercy towards them; from their not recollecting that Thou art their King, and that they are Thy subjects. But remember Thy covenant with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob! Maintain Thine own truth against their falsehood! Prove that Thou art their King, and make them to understand that they are Thy subjects! Teach them that Thou hast redeemed them,

though they deny that Thou hast, and therefore bow down to tyrants instead of cleaving to their Deliverer! Grant that they may have the full effects of their redemption; that they may come into the land which Thou hast promised them, unworthy and heartless as they may be; lest the heathen should doubt Thy love and power, and so Thy great Name should not be hallowed through Thy grace to us, but should be mocked and set at nought through our distrust of Thee!"

Here surely we have prayer according to its very nature and definition. Moses asks in faith, nothing doubting: he asks according to God's will; and therefore is sure that he is heard, and shall have his petition, in whatever form the answer may come. Whereas, if he had begun with considering the Jews as sinners and outcasts, and had only believed that they had a certain possibility in them of becoming holy, his prayer would have been an uneasy, restless struggle for a boon, which it might be altogether inconsistent with the nature and design of the Being whom he was imploring, to grant.

I said last Sunday that we in England have always attached a special worth to the Old Testament; that we have accepted it as an explanation of the law under which God has placed us; of the way in which He deals with us. The good men to whom I have referred would not, I am sure, wish us to abandon this reverence. They think, as I do, that we are in dan-

ger of losing it; that we need to hold it fast, and let no man, native or foreigner, wrench it from us. Let me beseech them not to be conspirators with the enemies of this faith. Let me beseech them not to exalt their own experiences, precious as they may be, into standards for judging of God's revelations, when they might use those revelations to illustrate and unfold their experiences.

They accuse themselves of stubbornness, wickedness, and sin. Why? Because a voice was speaking to them which they would not heed; because light was shining about them to which they closed their eyes. Now that they have yielded to the voice,—now that the light has penetrated them,—they are still conscious of the same evil tendencies. And they feel that they have a right to tell other men of their stubbornness, and wickedness, and sin. Is not the cause the same in those to whom they speak, as in themselves? Are not *they* refusing to hear a voice, shutting their eyes to a light that would break upon them? Is not that what we say when we preach the Gospel? Why not be consistent with this Gospel? Why not say that our stubbornness and wickedness, and theirs, consists in departing from an order which is ours and theirs? Why not adopt the very language of the Old Testament, and say, that we and they are members of a righteous Nation,—of a holy Society; and that we have refused to own it, and to act as if we were ourselves of it?

If we believe this, what a message we have to the most different classes amongst us! There are some who are living utterly reckless lives. There are some who are observing all proprieties and Christian ordinances, yet are conscious of a secret heartlessness and unbelief. There are those who have aspired to higher thoughts and feelings than ordinary men, and have been taught by some terrible lesson that they are exposed to the same temptations as people whom they had called carnal or worldly. These have moved in different circles, they have suspected and despised each other; but they have all need of the same help: they must have a common salvation, or none at all. They must discover that the covenant of God embraces them all; that each has a right to say, "God has called me, therefore I am holy; therefore my stubbornness and wickedness and sin have come from my not acting as if I were what God has declared that I am. Therefore I may ask Him not to look upon that stubbornness and wickedness and sin, but to remember His covenant, and set me right. So praying, I ask Him to fulfil His will, and not mine. I ask to be set free, not from the punishment which is the just and necessary requital for my evil, but from the evil itself, which I feel and know to be my real curse; from the sensual habit which is enslaving me,—from the secret pride in which I am wrapping myself up,—from the trust in my own heart, which has made me a fool."

Now one who is led to take up this ground for himself, identifies himself with all the people of his land. He has said, practically, "If there is not a covenant which is broad and deep enough for this whole nation, there is not one broad and deep enough for me." And so, I believe, he arrives at a truth which will help him to reconcile outward, what he has been used to call secular life, with that inward life which he had supposed was incompatible with it. We speak sometimes as if the Jewish history were unlike all others, because it refers all the common transactions of the world, all ordinary offices, all the statutes and ordinances of civil life, to God as their ground and author. I believe that we must come to understand that it is the rule of all other histories because it makes that proclamation; that we shall be less and less able to explain what a nation is, or how it can exist, if we refuse to think of Him as the present King and Lawgiver of it. When we are brought to that conviction, every fact in a nation's history becomes a sacred fact; every member of a nation must be regarded as a man called to a work and a stewardship; every task, from the highest to the lowest, is nothing less than one which God Himself has appointed. It becomes impossible then to think of citizenship in a nation as a privilege, appertaining to men in virtue of some external possessions and advantages. It must belong (as all the old statesmen taught that it did) to man, because he is a

spiritual creature. The more we enlarge the limits of earthly citizenship, the more we confess that we must treat all about us as possessing that higher glory. We are bound therefore to tell them upon what conditions they hold it; we are bound to assert for them all their relations to God. We are bound to tell them that society is not a combination of mutual fears and hatreds; that it has its ground in His Nature, Who is absolutely Righteous, in Whom is no darkness.

Such a faith cannot be shaken by any anomalies which the world around us presents. We may see in these anomalies the tokens and witnesses of a coming judgment; we cannot see in them the abrogation of any principle which the King of Kings has announced as the principle of His government. We must regard our nation as holy, in spite of its wickedness and stubbornness and sin. Therefore, for it, as much as for ourselves,—how can we separate it from ourselves? —we can still pray: "Remember not this wickedness and stubbornness and sin. Remember Thine own covenant. Remember Thy people whom Thou hast redeemed, with Thy mighty hand and outstretched arm."

This, then, is the ground upon which I speak of national repentance. It is not a fantastic, unreal repentance. Yours and mine must be of this kind, if it is good for anything, if it has any divine root; for we are not to claim a righteousness of our own. We

are to say we have none, and can have none. We are to thank God that, by raising Christ from the dead, He has declared His righteousness to be the only righteousness for us all. We are not to seek a selfish felicity. We are to lament before God that we have sought such a felicity, and to thank Him that by Christ's Sacrifice He has redeemed us from so miserable a pursuit. What is best for England is best for each Englishman; and this, because what is best for England is best for every nation. If we believe that our nation has a holy calling, we shall believe every nation to have a holy calling. The more we confess the stubbornness and wickedness and sin of our own people, the more we shall desire God to remove the stubbornness and wickedness and sin of every people under heaven. While we mourn over our gross idolatries, over the foul orgies of our Mammon-worship, we shall feel a confidence that all idols everywhere, of every kind, shall be utterly abolished. And so the prayer of Moses for his nation will pass into the prayer of Christ for the Universe. The cry of the text, "Yet they are Thy people and Thine inheritance," will only help us to understand better the cry of the Son, "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us."

Rogation Sunday.

May 17, 1857.

PSALM XV. (*Prayer-book Version.*)

"LORD, WHO SHALL DWELL IN THY TABERNACLE: OR WHO SHALL REST UPON THY HOLY HILL? EVEN HE THAT LEADETH AN UNCORRUPT LIFE: AND DOETH THE THING WHICH IS RIGHT, AND SPEAKETH THE TRUTH FROM HIS HEART. HE THAT HATH USED NO DECEIT IN HIS TONGUE, NOR DONE EVIL TO HIS NEIGHBOUR; AND HATH NOT SLANDERED HIS NEIGHBOUR. HE THAT SETTETH NOT BY HIMSELF, BUT IS LOWLY IN HIS OWN EYES: AND MAKETH MUCH OF THEM THAT FEAR THE LORD. HE THAT SWEARETH UNTO HIS NEIGHBOUR, AND DISAPPOINTETH HIM NOT: THOUGH IT WERE TO HIS OWN HINDRANCE. HE THAT HATH NOT GIVEN HIS MONEY UPON USURY: NOR TAKEN REWARD AGAINST THE INNOCENT. WHOSO DOETH THESE THINGS SHALL NEVER FALL."

THE Tabernacle which went with the Israelites through the wilderness was the witness that the Lord Himself was in the midst of them. They were told that He would dwell in it. When it was brought, amidst the shoutings of the King and people and with the sound of a trumpet, to Mount Zion, it did not acquire any new sacredness, but it imparted a sacredness to the place on which it rested. God was felt to be there: the city stood because He was present in it.

If, then, David or any Psalmist dared to ask this question, "Lord, who shall dwell in Thy Tabernacle, who shall rest upon Thy holy hill?" you might have expected him to answer, "Those priests who have been set apart by a special consecration,—upon whom garments of glory and beauty have been bestowed, upon whose foreheads *holiness to the Lord* is inscribed,—they may venture to approach His habitation; as Moses ascended Sinai, they may ascend Mount Zion." There would have been no vulgar superstition in such language. It would have been quite unlike the notion of a heathen worshiping on the hill that he might be nearer the Sun. It would only have intimated that a transcendent excellence, a kind of spiritual absorption, was demanded of any one who aspired to commune with the Everlasting God.

But how strangely different are the actual words of the Psalm! The qualities which are required of one, not who visits the Tabernacle merely, but who dwells in it,—not who ascends the hill only, but rests on it,—are those of an ordinary citizen, those without which a man cannot fulfil any of his common duties in the world. Nay, the qualities are chiefly negative. It is not said that he must be brave, magnanimous, ready to sacrifice himself. He is not to be corrupt in his life, not to take reward against the innocent, not to lie. One of the conditions reads as if it were drawn merely from the civil code of the

Israelites, as if it were temporary and local; but all are of the same mundane, commonplace kind. You cannot point out one which a person aiming at a sentimental, refined morality would care to introduce.

And yet the more we read the writers of the Old Testament, the more we shall be convinced that they had an awful, overwhelming sense of the Divine Majesty, and that they regarded the privilege of drawing nigh to it as the highest that could be conferred on any creature. Consider what we are told respecting the communings of Moses with the Lord God of Israel; consider what it was that sustained the heart and hope of every prophet, when he was crushed to the earth by the sins of his land and his own, and by the vision of coming desolation; consider the habitual language of the Psalmist, in hours of despair and in hours of rapture. The result in all cases will be the same. To be without God is to be cast down in the soul; to be in deep waters; to be in mire where no ground is. To be shown the light of His countenance is more than all treasures of corn and wine; in His presence is fulness of joy; to awake up after His likeness is to be satisfied. Whatever explanation there may be given of the apparent easiness of the terms upon which the blessing is to be realized, the explanation cannot be that the blessing itself was thought to be a light one, or that any other was set in competition with it.

The true key to the difficulty is found in a prin-

ciple which goes through the whole of the Jewish polity and of Old-Testament history. God is throughout spoken of as bringing His people into a true and right state, a state of fellowship with Himself. "He planted them," says the Prophet, "wholly a right seed;" by which words he of course does not teach them that they were by nature right or pure, or that they were less naturally wrong and impure than other men, or that their Covenant had changed their evil nature into a good one. The Prophet was continually making them feel that the reverse of all these assertion swas true; that they were naturally evil, and that they were as capable of indulging their evil heart, and they did actually indulge it, as much as any men who were not in the Covenant. Just so far as they followed their nature or trusted it, just so far they were the rebellious and the stiff-necked people of whom I was speaking to you last Sunday, out of the chapter in the Book of Deuteronomy which we have been reading today. And this was because they were refusing God's government, not entering into the Covenant, which implies that a man is good and right only while he renounces any goodness and rectitude of his own, and refers them to God. Therefore it was no contradiction to say of any men whomsoever who had been taken into God's Covenant: "They are wholly a right seed: whatsoever of wrong springs up in them is of their own seeking; it will come from their choosing a way of their own, from their liking

to be independent of their actual Ruler." But what was the necessary corollary from this statement? Surely, that there must be certain evil habits or tendencies which denoted a determination not to abide in the state into which God had called them. Such habits and tendencies being those to which men are prone, as a matter of course, if they are not seeking to counteract them, become the habits and tendencies of society,—those which are contracted without any deliberate purpose, by mere contagion,—those which establish themselves very soon into rules and maxims, of the Jewish world as much as of any other. To resist them was to believe God's Covenant; to believe that He had established His throne upon His holy hill of Sion; to believe that from that throne proceeded both law and the powers which make law effectual; to believe that He could and would put down, in the nation which He had chosen, and in every member of it, that which was contrary to His mind and will.

To resist such habits and tendencies was to deepen and strengthen this faith day by day, to gain ever new tests of its solidity, to learn more and more the nature of the Being Who enkindled it, and Who was the object of it. To resist these habits was to acquire a fixed dwelling in God's Tabernacle, a rest upon His holy hill. If the Psalmist had spoken of great and heroic efforts by which a man won admittance into that Tabernacle,—climbed to a seat on that holy

hill,—he would have contradicted the whole idea of heroism which he and his fathers had been taught to cherish. They were to get no high places for themselves at all; they were simply to do what they were told to do; to go where they were bidden to go. Whatever stood in their way, whether the obstacle were a material or a spiritual one, they were in God's strength to beat down. They were to assume that He was with them; not to assume it in every possible case, was to abandon their faith. No Jew could dare to say that God was present with him because he was better or more believing than his brethren. The Lord was in the holy hill, the Protector of the city, the bond of Jewish fellowship. The man who wanted to be something better than a citizen,—to have any individual privileges, instead of being one of that fellowship,—must go without the divine protection; he could not abide in the Tabernacle, or rest on Zion.

Hence it is obvious that the highest aspirations of the Jew, as a spiritual being, were inseparable from his most ordinary civil life. The priests, with their anointing oil and their garments of glory and beauty, did not dissolve the link between the outward and inner existence; they were the appointed witnesses of it. They went into the Holy Place with the sacrifices for all the daily transgressions of the common Israelite, as witnesses that there *he* was meant to abide, that he had wandered from that which was his proper native home, through carelessness of God's Law

and of his brother's well-being; that from that home was continually issuing a power of reconciliation and restoration. The priest's office suggested the highest idea of dedication to God, of intercourse with Him, but not as a strange superhuman gift, appertaining to a class of votaries, who, for the sake of it, cast all common interests aside; far rather as the gift for human beings, without which no man was able to live truly as a man, which might be realized most by those who were most on the watch to maintain their places simply and honestly, most aware of all the influences which were at work to draw them from it, and make them artificial and base. The confidence that the living and true God had called a man to be one of His servants and soldiers, would keep him from lying to his neighbour in his word and deed. Every lying word, act, and course of conduct, would weaken that confidence. The man who determined to cast away lying, not to be a usurer, not to take reward against the innocent, must be lowly in his own eyes, considering what temptations there were in him and around him to these evils. He must make much of them who, through fear of God, were able to overthrow these enemies,—who could take refuge from them in His righteousness.

On Ascension Day we shall use this Psalm: I rejoice in the selection of it for that high Festival. I think it bears mighty witness to the truth which I was trying to assert last Sunday,—that the life of the

Nation and the life of the Church,—the life of the Old and New Testaments,—stand in the closest relation with each other; and that we, in England, have still to study at the feet of the ancient Israelites. Let us apply then the lessons the Psalm has taught us to our own case.

I. The Lord, on the holy hill of Zion, was an object of distinct definite contemplation. When *we* speak of the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, do we mean a Being *less* distinct, *less* personal? Do we suppose that when Jesus said, *He that hath seen me hath seen the Father*, He meant our minds to wander in a hazy abstraction, from which the men of the elder world were delivered? Our reverence, let us be sure of that, is not promoted but destroyed by vagueness and unreality: and certainly that atmosphere is favourable to the growth of the most dark and degrading superstitions. A Being of Absolute Righteousness and Truth and Love, to whom our secret thoughts and hearts are open, is an object of awe to the man and the child, to the sage and the peasant. A mere Presence or Spiritual Essence does not really awaken awe in any one of them. They may talk of it and write about it, but they do not bow before it. And then the deep witness in the conscience of each of them that there *is* something more than this; something which is speaking to them, searching them, judging them, drives them to guess and conceive what this something may be. They clothe their fears with

shapes; these shapes are various as the fears or as the local circumstances of those who are tormented by them; their moral nature is derived from that of their votaries; out of a Pantheism which boasted of its universality and freedom, there springs the most slavish and dividing idolatry.

If we believe really that Christ, the Son of Man, is gone up on high, in an actual body, to Him with whom He dwelt before all worlds, we believe that the King who dwelt on the Holy Hill of Zion has revealed Himself more distinctly, more perfectly, than He did of old; that we are admitted into a far higher knowledge of Him than the Jews were; that the communion which the Psalmist spake of as possible for himself, possible for Jews, is, in its highest idea, realized for us; that the purpose and effect of the dispensation of God has been to remove the obstacles which interfered with it. The Jew was still haunted by the sense of distance in space. The Ascension of Our Lord removes that burden from the spirit. He has led that captivity captive. He proved that there was in Him a power to break through the impassable barrier which served to separate earth from heaven. The freedom which He asserted for the body He had taken implies a like freedom in the spirit assuming it,—that it can break through those humiliations of sense which it had always felt to be unworthy of its birth, and yet which it had vainly striven to shake off.

II. The Ascension of Christ, like the placing of the Tabernacle on the holy hill, claims equal privileges for us all. No Englishman who believes it may say to his brother Englishman, "The highest privileges of the New Covenant are not for thee;" just as no Israelite might say to his brother Israelite, "The highest privileges of the Covenant with Abraham are not for thee." David asserts the same doctrine which we heard Moses asserting; St. Paul is in strict agreement with both. Christ has claimed for us a place in his Father's House, the place of sons and daughters. His Father is our Father. In that right we may ascend the holy hill. To say that we ascend it in virtue of any feelings, sensations, holiness of ours, is to set aside the Incarnation, Sacrifice, Ascension of Christ.

These are not acts done for a set of wise, good, faithful, elevated persons. They are not done for certain favourites of Heaven. They are announced in the streets and highways as done for the outcasts that dwell in them, because they were done for all human beings. We must receive them as common blessings, or not receive them at all.

III. And what then is the reason why we do not receive them, seeing that they are so freely given? The fifteenth Psalm again gives the reason. It appertains to us in all its strictness. Yes, brethren, this plain, simple, vulgar explanation of the secret is the true one, and the only true one. It is time for

the Minister of God to resume that homely language. We have talked as if people might be very good in all their relations with their neighbours, and yet something might be wanting to make them servants of God. They must be something over and above honest and true citizens in order to dwell upon the holy hill, and abide in God's Tabernacle. We did not learn that mode of teaching from the Old-Testament books. They say boldly: "You are not honest and straightforward in your dealings with your neighbours; therefore you do not think that God is honest and straightforward in his dealings with you. You do not trust Him. You do not confess your sins to Him. You do not draw nigh to His holy hill." Has the New Testament altered that lesson? Does it introduce another? No doubt there is *this* difference: the New Testament tells us more perfectly than the Old how we may rise out of the most base, corrupt, dishonest habits; how God has revealed His righteousness in Christ, for the remission of sins. But He *has* revealed His righteousness. Therefore He has said that no unrighteousness can have any fellowship or intercourse with Him. He has revealed His truth. Therefore He has shown that no falsehood can have intercourse with Him. Christ, Who is the way and the truth and the life, has ascended on high that there might be a way for us into the presence of the Eternal Living Truth, that we might share His Nature.

Is that the end which we English Christians are

proposing to ourselves? Then let us rejoice and sing; for Christ has ascended on high that we might be delivered from our old evil life, and that we might possess a righteous life in Him. We may give up lying one to another, we may be set free from that worship of money—that delight in its power of self-multiplication—which is the spirit of usury, and which does breed all immorality and dishonesty, which has reduced the Jewish nation to baseness and degradation, and which must reduce every nation that is possessed by it to the same degradation; we may shake off the vanity and self-gratification which accompany these tendencies, and become lowly in our own eyes; we may learn to make much of honest, God-fearing men, instead of being crawling sycophants to rich men. But if this is not what we want, if we want a religion that will make us easy and comfortable in the frauds which belong to our different crafts and professions,—if the shopkeeper lifts up his voice loudly in denunciation of Popery or some unpopular opinion, that he may more securely and with less sense of self-reproach adulterate his goods, and use the false weight and the deceitful balances which are abominable,—if lawyers and clergymen adopt a seemly respectable Christianity that they may not be forced to ask themselves whether they are speaking words honestly and simply as in the sight of Almighty God, whether they are doing acts which they can ask Him to scrutinize,—then, brethren, we

ought to be told, one and all of us, that the hill of Sinai, on which the thunders sounded loud and long, is not more terrible than the Zion on which God dwells; that the New Testament is not more but less tolerant of such practices than the Old; that God will appear as a swift witness against our crimes and falsehoods as He did against those of the Jews; that Christ has not ascended on high to make it more possible for us to have fellowship with God here or hereafter, but rather to testify that between us and a God of eternal justice and truth there can be no fellowship whatever. And this, not because we are wanting in some celestial transcendent qualities which men have dreamed of as befitting a Church, but because we have those qualities which are destructive of nations.

I have brought my discourse to the point at which I was aiming. When I spoke a fortnight ago of national righteousness and national holiness, I was prepared for two opposite classes of objections. One would proceed from those who can recognize nothing but individual righteousness and holiness: those I reasoned with last week. The second would proceed from those who say they believe in a holy Catholic Church, but that what this has to do with a nation they cannot conceive. In fact, they look upon the nation and the Church as scarcely compatible, as for the most part direct opposites. I believe that in the sense which this theory gives to the words "Catholic Church," they *are* deadly opposites; that a nation is now, as it ever

was, pledged to treat idolatry as its curse and destruction, and that a Church which tries to organize itself into an independent visible society with a visible head must by its very nature encourage idolatry, and always has encouraged it in fact. I believe further, that a nation is pledged to maintain a wholesome, practical, manly morality, entirely opposed to that morality of "touch not, taste not, handle not," which a Church such as I have described must by its nature favour, and has always favoured in fact,—a morality consistent with the grossest deviations from common truth and honesty. And I solemnly conjure those Protestant assertors of individual holiness of whom I spoke last Sunday, to see well to it that by their teaching they are not hindering the great protest against idolatry which is involved in the very existence of a nation, and substituting for it a poor pitiful protest against some legislative act which they have determined, by certain indications of their own, to be idolatrous,—whether they are not substituting certain capricious and artificial maxims for the homely morality of the Bible, and whether thus they may not be preparing their sons for that very system which they most dread.

But on the other hand, I would maintain that a holy Catholic Church, in its truest, widest, deepest sense, does lie beneath the holy and righteous nation; that they are not contraries, but that one is the vestibule to the other; that each is the support of the

other; that this Church is no imaginary utopian society, no artificial society, but a real society constituted in Christ our ascended Lord. Thus the ascension of Christ to the right hand of the Father, that He might fill all things, is the meeting-point between these two divine principles, these two human societies. In it we find the consummation of all the expectations and hopes of the old world, that in it we might find the beginning of all that is purest and holiest in the new.

Sunday after Ascension Day.

May 24, 1857.

EPHESIANS I. 19–23.

"AND WHAT IS THE EXCEEDING GREATNESS OF HIS POWER TO US-WARD WHO BELIEVE, ACCORDING TO THE WORKING OF HIS MIGHTY POWER, WHICH HE WROUGHT IN CHRIST, WHEN HE RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD, AND SET HIM AT HIS OWN RIGHT HAND IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES, FAR ABOVE ALL PRINCIPALITY, AND POWER, AND MIGHT, AND DOMINION, AND EVERY NAME THAT IS NAMED, NOT ONLY IN THIS WORLD, BUT ALSO IN THAT WHICH IS TO COME: AND HATH PUT ALL THINGS UNDER HIS FEET, AND GAVE HIM TO BE THE HEAD OVER ALL THINGS TO THE CHURCH, WHICH IS HIS BODY, THE FULNESS OF HIM THAT FILLETH ALL IN ALL."

THE Epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians may be called the Epistles concerning the Resurrection. They declare how God, by raising up Jesus from the dead, justified us from all things from which we could not be justified by the works of the law. To these Epistles the Reformers in the sixteenth century turned for instruction and consolation. They found in them the very message which they were wanting to hear. It was a message to the burdened conscience; it told each man who had committed sin and become

the servant of sin, where he might find his Deliverer and True Master.

In time the references in these Epistles to the Resurrection of Christ began to be less heeded. They were said to be expositions of the doctrine of justification by *Faith*,—"The Resurrection was a general act; how could that justify the particular sinner?" If it did not, what was his justification? The answer brought back a subtler kind of self-righteousness than that from which the preaching of the Reformers had proclaimed emancipation. Justification by works was to be disclaimed in words, as Popish and horrible; but the Faith that was demanded was to all intents and purposes a work, a most painful work,—a work which might be as good a foundation for self-glorification, as well as self-torture, as those which it had displaced. How is this danger, this real and practical danger to be escaped? Only, I have endeavoured to show you, by recurring to the exact language of the Apostle, by asserting that the resurrection of Christ from the dead *is* God's witness of our justification; that if we do not receive that witness, Faith has nothing to rest upon; that if we do receive that witness, we acknowledge God as the Justifier, and give over boasting of our own acts, external or internal.

The effect of thus exalting the wisdom of the Bible is no doubt this: that we are obliged to regard the justification as much more general than the modern

disciples of Luther would make it. But if by doing so we vindicate his doctrine from the most terrible inversion,—if we show what Faith is,—if we explain why St. Paul unites *his* assertion of justification with his Gospel to all nations, and with a protest against Jewish exclusiveness; we have some compensation for the dangerous latitude which under his authority we introduce. And we have this further compensation: we are able to feel the connection between these Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, and the Epistle to the Ephesians, which the Reformers prized and understood less; and which some of their recent followers would deny to St. Paul altogether, because it does not appear to them to proclaim the formula of justification in the terms in which they suppose that *their* Lutheran apostle ought to proclaim it. The Epistle to the Ephesians may, I believe, be rightly called the Epistle concerning the *Ascension*. If we so regard it, we shall find that it abundantly confirms all the testimony which St. Paul deduced from Christ's victory over death in his other Epistles; and that it also gives the full meaning and force to the hints of the glorification, as well as the justification of humanity, which are contained but not developed in them.

I have endeavoured to show you, in some recent sermons, that we Englishmen, if we are faithful to our own peculiar vocation, must attach a greater, not less, importance to the doctrine of Justification, as St. Paul sets it forth, than the Protestants in other lands. It

is the bulwark of our national existence and national morality. When we confess God as our Justifier, we confess that He has chosen us to be a righteous people, and that our wrong-doings all imply a departure from the state into which He has brought us. When we cease to confess Him as our Justifier, our acts are done either without reference to Him, or without reference to our position as fellow-citizens; we make our own code of duties; He is not the ground of our common life; but only of certain special services, by which we hope to recommend ourselves to Him, or which we perform for the sake of making our own individual condition and prospects better. But a Justification which concerns a nation, cannot have its *basis* in the faith of individuals. It must rest upon acts of God done for men generally. If the individual sinner will not accept *these* as the warrant of his faith,—if he will not humble himself before God, because he has not acknowledged the love and forgiveness which are manifested in these to him and to his race,—the Scripture testifies against him; his conscience testifies against him; in due time, his acts will testify against him. He may call himself a believer, or what he pleases, but his belief will bear no fruits, or bad fruits; no person from seeing his works will glorify the Father in Heaven.

On the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, then, by the Will of the Father, our English faith and whatever right acts proceed from it must stand. But

last Sunday I strove to show that this and these acts point also to an Ascension. Taking the fifteenth Psalm as my guide, I maintained that the highest idea of communion with the King on the holy hill of Sion which an Israelite could possess, was associated with the most commonplace civic morality; that the communion was impossible if the morality was wanting; that the communion made the morality permanent by grounding it on the Nature of God Himself. The Church, by choosing this Psalm for Ascension Day, gave me a right to apply the lessons which it teaches to English Christians. I told you that I believed it was not our want of some sublime ideal of devotion, but our indifference to truth and honesty in our ordinary dealings with each other, which unfitted us for communion with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. I told you that I did not think we should repent of our dishonesty and untruthfulness, or should become better citizens, till we believed that God had exalted His Son to His own right-hand on purpose that we might draw nigh to Him, the God of Truth, the Faithful God, and might be delivered from all that has kept us at a distance from Him and from each other. But before I concluded, I said that the Ascension was the vindication of national morality and national unity, because it proclaimed a universal Morality and a perfect Unity. It may help us in England to be true servants of the Lord our King, true defenders of our soil and tongue and institutions, because it reveals One clothed in our

nature, Who is "*far above all principality, and power, and might, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come;*" One "*who is Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.*"

I. As I find here the realization of the widest Catholicism, and the most Catholic Church of which men have ever dreamed, I am desirous that you should not overlook the connection between these latter words of the chapter and the nineteenth, which I took for the first words of my text. The Apostle desires that the Ephesian Christians may know "*what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe.*" I can easily imagine that a person who has been wont to speak of the privileges of Believers till he has brought himself to think (or to think that he thinks) of them as separated by their belief from the rest of human beings,—I can easily imagine that such a person will exclaim triumphantly, "See then, that clause determines the meaning of all which follows. Whatever glory the Apostle, or rather the Spirit of God, may unfold, these are the persons to whom He will unfold it." Even so. I rejoice to think it. And therefore let us consider who these persons were, and what He wishes them to know about their condition. They were a very small society, aliens from the Synagogue, aliens from the Gentile temple, regarded with scorn by those whom they met in the market-place. They were obliged to live much within their own circle. They had the best

causes for thinking that it was dangerous to wander beyond that circle; that all breezes from the world without ought to be excluded; that all openings through which they might obtain glimpses of it should be stopped up. It is to *these* persons that St. Paul speaks of a fellowship that was quite illimitable. The reward of their faith was, that they could not separate themselves from any creature bearing the form of a man. To do so was *not* to believe in Christ. To believe in Him was to acknowledge One Who represented mankind at the right-hand of the Father.

II. Such a faith as this, carrying them so far above all appearances, contradicting the conclusions of their natural understandings, overcoming the temptations that most beset them, could not be attributed to anything less than a Divine Operation on their spirits. That it could be awakened in them, that it could be kept in exercise, was a proof of the exceeding greatness of God's power. But the Apostle cannot measure that power by this manifestation, wonderful as it is. He cannot even explain the existence of this faith in any individual man, except by saying that it was according to "*the mighty power which*" the Father "*wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him on His own right-hand in heavenly places.*" Here is the measure and standard of God's working. Here is that complete manifestation of it, of which every other is only a subordinate part. The power which kept the Son still trusting when He was passing into

death, the power which raised the Son from the dead, is not another power, but the selfsame with that which kindles faith in any single soul; which enables any single soul to confess its relation to God and its brethren; which lifts it out of its own solitary hell. The power which raised up any man into the largeness and freedom of fellowship with God and with the universe, is the power which exalted Christ to the right-hand of the Majesty on High. A conviction most helpful to all who will take it in; one which will explain innumerable passages in the Divine Economy; one which brings order into our most confused thoughts; one which may often save us from despair when we feel our own faith and the faith of those who surround us to be weakened. It makes us feel that we are indeed members of a body into which all life passes from the Head. It shows how entirely we invert God's method, and destroy the very principle and root of all personal faith, when we place it before those acts of Christ which reveal God's universal will and purpose.

III. In the verse of which I have just spoken, the Resurrection and Ascension are used to explain the *principle* of faith. In the next verses they are held forth to us as its *object*. The world had quailed before a multitude of powers, visible and invisible; before taskmasters that had caused them to make bricks without straw; before more cruel taskmasters, who had told them they must please an invisible master that would reap where he had not sown; before shapes that were

created by their own evil consciences; before tyrants that slew the body, and then had no more that they could do; before subtle and horrible tempters, who sought to destroy both soul and body in hell. Before these, men had trembled; these they had sought to conciliate by accursed sacrifices. To these they had brought their first-born; to these they had offered up their own selves, doing all the false and wicked acts which false and wicked beings could commit and inspire. St. Paul declares that far above all these; far above all these imperial and sacerdotal oppressors; far above the cruel gods, the spirits of evil to which they and their victims had done homage, He was exalted Who had been meek and lowly, Who had proved Himself the Good Shepherd, first by seeking the sheep that had gone astray, then by giving His life for them. All that had trampled upon man was proved to be poorer and feebler than He Who had come as Man's Deliverer. He Who wore a crown of thorns was proved to be the Prince of all the kings of the earth. He Who had gone down into hell, had triumphed over the principalities of hell, making a show of them openly. This St. Paul held to be the true faith of a Christian; hereby it was marked out as different from the faiths that had gone before it, or that still struggled with it in the world. Either they pointed to such a Conqueror as this; bearing witness that such a one must be; rudely and imperfectly grasping at some one aspect of His character; or else they were the assertion of some

form of tyranny which men had felt to be intolerable; against which they had struggled wearily but not hopelessly. There might assuredly be honest believers in Christ who did not see what was implied in their confession. If they had understood it in the length and breadth of it, they would not have needed the teaching of an Apostle, or his prayer that their eyes might be enlightened, that they might know the grandeur of their calling and the nature of the testimony they had to bear. But if these believers thought it positively better to have a faith for themselves than a faith for the Universe, they must in turn learn to say, "We do *not* believe that He rose again the third day from the dead, or that He ascended into Heaven, or that He sitteth on the right-hand of the Father."

IV. The Apostle's language had been so large and yet so minute that it might seem to close all the avenues through which the subtle and versatile Spirit of Unbelief might force an entrance into the heart. "He may be mightier than the rulers of earth; but is He, than the rulers of air? Mightier than the visible; but is He, than the invisible? Mightier than these in this age or this world; but what of the world or the age to come?" St. Paul knew all these suggestions. He had provided against them all. Yet he is not satisfied. "Inferiority may not mean subjection. Christ may be greater than the powers of evil. But who can say that they are *put under His feet?*" St. Paul is bold enough to say so. St. Paul, who had thrice suf-

fered stripes,—St. Paul, who had hardly escaped from the mob at Ephesus,—St. Paul, who was in Nero's hands at Rome,—St. Paul dares to tell these disciples of his, that the powers of the world are put under Christ. St. Paul, who says in this very Epistle, that he is still wrestling, and that all his brethren are wrestling, with principalities and powers, with spiritual wickedness in high places, dares here declare without a qualifying clause, that all these also are put under Christ. And he knew what he was saying. He himself—or whoever it was that wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews—explaining what he means, explains it in connection with the facts which appeared to contradict it. He has quoted the Psalm which affirms that all things are put under *Man;* all sheep and oxen, and the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air. He adds: "Now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, Who for the suffering of death was made a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honour." I do not think he could have conveyed his meaning more clearly. It is no doubt an unfinished strife as far as we are concerned. We are still in the midst of it; every event that befalls us showing how desperate it is; our bodies showing that the visible oppressors are still sitting on thrones; our spirits bearing more terrible scars from the blows of their masters. The animal is not yet everywhere submitting to the yoke of the man; the man is continually bearing the yoke of the animal.

And how often does he put on a yoke that is worse than animal? The malice, falsehood, hypocrisy, that possess him—these do not come from the fowls of the air or the fishes of the sea. But One Who bore our nature, did, so we believe, establish the lordship of the human over the animal; of the human over the devilish. One, so we believe, Who has that nature, has also proved His claim to another Nature, of which ours is the image. He, so we teach, is crowned with glory and honour, is at the right-hand of God; binds us to God. His Ascension declares that all things are now put under Him. That is the warrant of all hope for the future. The confidence with which the Apostles believed that the kingdoms of the world had in very deed been proved to be the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ, explains the longing with which they looked forward to the final unveiling of Christ; their zeal to keep that longing alive in their disciples. They could not define the limits of His conquests, who had ascended on high that He might fill everything. Would any part of His voluntary or involuntary creation be able to maintain its independence of Him? Would not all confess Him to be Lord, in the glory of God the Father?

V. But what is the witness of this constitution in Christ? what is it that lives to prophesy of this ultimate victory? *He has given Him to be Head over all things to His* CHURCH, *which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.* "How hard it

is," people often say, "to get a satisfactory definition of the Church! Where shall we find it?" Nowhere, I believe, if not here. If this account of it appears to you inadequate, the Scripture will not help you in your search for another.

The Scripture has been teaching us how God chose out a family to testify of Him and of His relation to men; how He chose out a nation to testify of Him and of His relation to men; how, finally, He sent forth members of that family and that nation, to bid men of all lands enter into covenant and fellowship with Him, because He had set forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law,—because He had given up that Son to die the death of all men,—because He had raised that Son from the dead in His human soul and body,—because He had exalted Him in that soul and body to His own right-hand. On that warrant men were invited to come to be baptized. Being baptized, they were to declare that they were the adopted children of God, because they were members of Christ's body. They were to say to all men, "This is your Head, as He is ours; you have the right to take your place in this Body, as we have; if we say that you are excluded from it, we cut ourselves off from it."

Here was the Gospel which the nations received. Here is the explanation of all Christian brotherhood, and of all the acts which have ever proved that brotherhood to be something more than a name. If this

society called Christian had not courage to say, "We are called out to be members of a body of which Jesus Christ, the Son of Man and the Son of God, is the glorified Head, we are actually one with Him where He is, He is actually dwelling with us where we are," they disclaimed their history; they renounced the charter on which their calling and their privileges rested; they made themselves something which God had not made them; and, of necessity, just so far as they were guilty of this apostasy, they made themselves a curse to the world which they were appointed to bless.

We cannot speak this language too strongly: it must be spoken far more strongly than it has ever been spoken yet. All the blessings which individual men have ever received from the Gospel of Jesus Christ,—all the strength that it has imparted to men dying at sick-beds, or dying at the stake,—all the conversions from darkness to light, from sin to righteousness, of which it has been the cause,—all the brave, self-denying acts which it has ever prompted,—all the earnest thoughts and hopes which it has ever kindled, can be traced directly to the belief which our Communion Service expresses,—of which it declares the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to be the pledge; that we dwell in Christ and that Christ dwells in us; that we are very members incorporate in the body of Him that filleth all in all. Take away that faith, and you do not take away some grand mystical conception

of Christianity; you take away all that has made it practical, all that has made it dear to the hearts of sinners and sufferers, all that bound together men of different races, classes, countries, ages. Take that faith away, and the Church becomes either a collection of individuals who are exalting themselves on their separation from the rest of mankind, and who, as is meet, prove by their continual jealousies, suspicions, strifes, schisms, that a bond of opinion and profession is no bond at all; or else it becomes a huge political system, an incubus upon the life of nations, of families, of individuals, asserting loudly by its acts and its words that it must have another head than Christ, that it does not regard itself as the body of Him that filleth all in all.

What is our duty, then, brethren? For the sake of numbers in our own land, who can find no peace in narrow societies that are bound together in the profession of certain opinions and under certain leaders, and yet will not abandon what they have learnt in those societies—are not disposed to exchange those leaders—for any that we prefer to them; for the sake of thousands who are groaning under our sins, who have the same inward needs as we have, and yet feel as if they were cut off from all fellowship,—as if they were consigned to a hopeless unbelief; for the sake of the nations abroad that have struggled vainly, madly, for freedom, and feel that there are some chains upon them which are mightier than those with

which unjust monarchs or evil laws have bound them; for the sake of all that a religious system has driven into Atheism, because they would not worship a god who is a tyrant, but who are yearning to be told of a God who is a Deliverer; for the sake of all that is dear and precious in history, all that is worth retaining in the present, all the good that prophets and sages bid us hope for against hope in the times to come; let us assert the old faith of Ascension Day. Let us make the members of sects understand that we are setting up no opinions of ours against theirs, no leaders of ours against their leaders; that we desire to justify all that they and their fathers have clung to in their darkest and their bravest hours, all that their leaders taught them when they were inspired with most indignation against our indifference to Christ and His Gospel; that what we preach is Christ the One Head of a body which time and space cannot bound, Christ the source and the object of their faith and ours, Christ the destroyer of all sects, inasmuch as He unites man to God. Let us make Spaniards, Frenchmen, Italians, understand that we do not ask them to leave their churches for ours, to accept any single English tradition which is not also theirs, or to travel through the path by which God led the Teutonic nations in the sixteenth century. Nor do we encourage them to rid them by any sudden and violent effort of that spiritual despotism which we believe is hindering them from being, not Protestant,

but Catholic; which is preying upon their national because it is preying upon their moral life. We only say, "Believe, as the Church in all ages and in all countries has professed to believe, that Christ, the common Brother and Head of men, has ascended on high, and that all powers in this earth, and everywhere else in God's creation, are subject to Him. Determine that you will follow that faith into all its consequences; then we know that chains which no other charm has been able to break will fall from your hearts; then it will be given to you to set your countrymen free. If you seem at first to your enemies a paltry and feeble band, they will find soon that invisible hosts are on your side. Not the relics of the saints, but the saints themselves, with all that have been refused that name on earth, but whom God has counted worthy of it; all that have given their lives for their land and for the Truth, will fight for you. He Whose eyes are as a flame of fire, and on Whose head are many crowns, the Word of God, will go forth before you; and your tyrants—those who seem so mighty today—you shall see them again no more for ever."

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Whit-Sunday.

May 31, 1857.

EPHESIANS IV. 8.

"WHEREFORE HE SAITH, WHEN HE ASCENDED UP ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE, AND GAVE GIFTS UNTO MEN."

FESTIVALS, like this of Whitsuntide, awaken a sad feeling in the hearts of many amongst us. We say, "These days meant something once; they called forth a strange, undefinable gladness. They were signs of a fellowship between men of the same neighbourhood, of the same nation,—even of different nations. They worked themselves into the very tissue of human life. They fixed epochs; they marked when solemn assemblies were to be convened, when great enterprises were to be undertaken. Lawyers and politicians could not regulate their business without reference to them. Above all, they were popular. The peasant and the mechanic, however little he might understand about their more mysterious signification, was certain that they had a signification. They spoke to him in a language clearer than the language of books is ever

likely to become to him,—perhaps clearer than it is to those who read them most intelligently and laboriously."

So many speak; so most of us, at some time or other, have thought. And then, probably, according to the mood of our minds at that time, or our education, or our opinions, we have internally added: "Well, this is over now; only the shadow of the name lasts, and that is disappearing." Or we console ourselves with the reflection that what was linked, as we suppose, to so many superstitious thoughts of miraculous agency and priestly power should be doomed to perish. Or we dwell on the compensation for the loss which is supplied, or may sometime be supplied, by a more general book-culture. Or we congratulate ourselves that amongst us at least there remains just enough of traditional reverence for these seasons to make it possible that by due care, perhaps by some unwonted ceremonies in the observance of them, the old affection for them may be restored.

These contradictory feelings are equally characteristic of our time; not of different men, but of the same man. The zealous reverer of old ecclesiastical customs this year may denounce the utter unreality of such experiments the next; the man who counts nothing precious which does not bear the image and superscription of this age, may begin to sigh for that which is passed away; he who supposed there was something hopeful in the attachment of English-

men to the habits and recollections of their fathers, may pronounce them to be the most wretchedly secular of all people, immersed in business, utterly careless of everything that is not material. Sometimes the result of these meditations is utter indifference and recklessness; sometimes it is a determination to uphold a stern Puritanism, because that seems most accordant with our character; sometimes it is a renunciation of all our cold, island peculiarities: "for what," we ask, "does a Church mean, if it is to separate from us all peoples, when it should be the sign of our union with them?"

My brethren, there is still one possibility left; and it is of that I wish to speak this afternoon. May not Whitsuntide be *very much more* to us than it ever was to our forefathers? May it not be *less* of a shadow, more of a substance, to us than it was to them? May it not in its inmost signification mix with all our common transactions as it once did, as it still does in some degree, in its outward forms? May it not sustain our practical, business-like habits? May it not connect them with something more of life and joy than we usually suppose to be compatible with them? May it not preserve us from some of our dry book tendencies, by showing what there is beneath the letter of books with which our hearts may hold converse? May it not teach us to hold more firmly than ever that reverence for the invisible, for the spiritual, that dislike of the idolatrous, the merely ex-

ternal, which Puritanism has witnessed for? May it not give us a sense of that glory that is enshrined in all nature and art, which Puritanism has refused to recognize? May it not oblige us to prize, as we never have prized, all the gifts of which we as a nation have been made stewards, all that is peculiar and distinctive of ourselves? May it not unite us to the whole of Christendom, as we never were united in any foregone age, when we joined with them in confessing a visible father of Christendom?

That this, which is possible, will become actual, I believe, not because I have any confidence in any efforts which we can make to preserve that which we have, or to recover that which we have lost, or to acquire that which was denied to elder ages; not because I am ignorant what contempt has been deserved and earned by those of us who have devised ingenious schemes for establishing alliances with other Churches, for fencing ourselves in our isolation from all Churches, for constituting some new Church that shall supplant all which exists; but because I find in the restlessness which invents such schemes, and in their failure, proofs that God is at work amongst us, rousing us to a sense of our needs, humbling us by a discovery of our impotence, preparing us for issues which are entirel beyond our imagination, but which are shadowed forth in the previous history of the Church and the Nations, and without which the most positive statements and promises of Scripture must prove fallacious and abortive.

I spoke last Sunday of Ascension Day as a witness of a victory actually accomplished for the human race over all powers that had held it in subjection, of an actual glorification of Man in the person of Him Who is declared to be the Head of every man. Such are the direct assertions of this Epistle to the Ephesians. All its doctrine is set at naught, all its practical exhortations are turned into pompous inanities, if these assertions are denied or emptied of their force and universality. That they had been denied, that they had been emptied of their force and universality, not by one section of Christendom but by both its sections, by that which vaunts of its Catholicism, by that which vaunts of its Protestantism, I acknowledged. The cause of the apostasy in each appeared to be the same, though the method in which it has worked was different. The Headship of Christ over that society which the Apostle affirms to be His body had been, to all intents and purposes, disbelieved by those who yet talked of themselves as the Catholic Church. It had reconstituted itself in another head. It had affirmed him to be the bond and ground of its universality. It had thereby separated Heaven from earth, the invisible world from the visible. And yet it had kept up a show of their connection; had substituted symbols for the reality; had galvanized a decapitated corpse and made it mimic the acts and assume the attributes of a living body. No *such* substitution of a vicarious for a real Christ,—of a mortal endued with absolute power to hold men

captive, to prohibit all free exercises of thought and life,—for one who is passed into the Heavens that He might lead captivity captive, is sanctioned amongst us. We bear witness against it. We like to dwell upon the facts in history—even to strain them further than they will go—which prove that the Monarch of Christendom has been, and is likely to be, worse than the ordinary monarch of the nation; more base, more covetous, more eager for the worldly aggrandizement of his own kindred, than those who are but called secular, and who by strictest law may transmit their honours to their heirs. We note these facts industriously; we cull them as choice morsels out of the narrative in which they are imbedded; we turn away with a not very honest dislike from any indications of an opposite kind which we suppose may weaken their effect. And yet, after all, the unbelief which is at the root of this Papal outrage upon the rights of the Son of Man is dwelling in our hearts, is affecting all our thoughts and all our acts. We suppose the Church to consist of a number of religious parties, each professing its own opinions, each bound together by a certain name of its own. We talk cantingly and insincerely of the melancholy divisions which exist amongst us, and of our great wish that all would unite. But we have no faith that all are united in one Head. We have no faith that He has led captive the captivity to these sects, notions, and names. We have no faith that it is His purpose to gather all together

in one. That is to say, we do not acknowledge the fact of an Ascension as St. Paul acknowledged it, more than those whom we denounce.

Or, if we hold ourselves in a measure free from these sectarian alliances—if we refuse to be sectarian outside of the National Church or within it—that very phrase, *National Church,* becomes continually an excuse for the same forgetfulness of the Universal Head, for the same unbelief that all principalities and powers are put under His feet. A National Church should mean, a Church which exists to purify and elevate the mind of a nation; to give those who make and administer and obey its laws, a sense of the grandeur of law and of the source whence it proceeds; to tell the rulers of the nation, and all members of the nation, that all false ways are ruinous ways, that truth is the only stability of our time or of any time. It should exist to make men tremble at the voice of God speaking to them in their consciences, to tell them that what He is telling them will be proclaimed before the universe, that every deed which men wish to hide shall be brought forth into the clear and open day. This should be the meaning of a National Church: a nation wants a Church for these purposes mainly; a Church is abusing its trust if it aims at any other or lower purposes. Is that the conception of it amongst us or amongst you? If the Church become such a Church as I have described, will the easy, comfortable men of England like it?

will they tolerate it? Do they not tolerate it because they take it to be something altogether different from this? Do they not suppose that they have hired the clergy, at a certain price, to keep the lower classes from breaking loose; and that we, your servants, are only entitled to our wages so long as we prove by our acts that we confess no higher masters; so long as it is evident that we regard the temporary maxims and conventions of society as paramount to the laws which are not of today or yesterday, but come forth from the mouth of the Eternal God? Can you or we adhere to terms so ridiculous, so self-contradictory as these? Must you not discover that we fail to do the work for which you say you have engaged us, when we execute it upon such conditions? You wish us to preach to the people out of the Bible; but the Bible bids us tell the people that Christ is the actually living Head of all principalities and powers. If we keep back that part of our message, we deny the whole of it. If we proclaim that part of it, what becomes of our bargain with you, which proceeds upon a theory of the universe that is the very opposite of this?

I repeat these statements; with God's help I will not be weary of repeating them, not only because I believe they are especially needed for this time, but because the hopes which I have expressed respecting the good which we are still to derive from this festival of Whitsuntide, are inseparably connected with them.

The text speaks of gifts which were bestowed on

man when Christ had ascended on high and led captivity captive. Those gifts were witnesses of a fellowship established between Heaven and earth; of a direct relation between human beings and their Father in Heaven. Supposing the Church on earth to be divided from the Church in Heaven; supposing it to have another head than the Son of Man and the Son of God, the character of these gifts must be changed, or they must have ceased altogether. Each opinion has been adopted, and has become the faith or the unbelief of a portion of Christendom. The (so-called) Catholic portion of it affirms that powers descend now, as of old, upon the rulers of the Church —powers of absolution, powers of discernment of spirits, powers of healing. All these belong to a purely miraculous economy; they are exceptions from the law of human life; they establish the dignity and dominion of certain especial persons. Certain officers possess transcendent functions; certain saints can work miracles. By an effort of faith these officers are to be recognized as unlike other human beings, these saints are to be reverenced for their powers of breaking through the order of God's world. Above all, such gifts may be expected from that which is not alive, but dead. Relics are more likely to produce wonders than actual beings who speak and breathe.

Think of these notions, and then read those chapters in the Epistle to the Corinthians which treat of spiritual gifts, or this chapter in the Epistle to the

Ephesians. Observe how carefully everything in the Apostle's discourse is grounded, not upon some great exception in the course of God's Providence, but upon a universal truth which has been manifested for men, of which the Church is the appointed witness and proclaimer. Observe how he warns the Corinthians against the mere admiration of strangeness and novelty in these gifts, to which people educated among heathen enchantments were so liable. Observe how he points out the utility of the gifts as a special criterion of their worth. Observe how lightly he esteems the mere startling accidents of such endowments; how he speaks of *these* as transitory and belonging to childhood. Observe how everywhere he opposes the living Spirit to the dumb idols, the dead things to which in their time of darkness they had attached sacredness and efficiency. Observe how, in that Epistle to the Corinthians, and even more in this to the Ephesians, government, orders, offices, are all declared to be for the good of the whole family; and to be signs of the care of the Father of that family for it and for all its members, and of the intercourse which there is between Him and them, in the Mediator. Observe how the Spirit, to Whom all these gifts are referred, Who is said to be ever ready to awaken them in those who have become forgetful and torpid, is treated as the Spirit of Unity, the Spirit of Love, ever proceeding afresh from Him in Whom He dwells perfectly, to supply any joint, to make every joint minister to the well-being of the whole. Ponder

this difference well, and then ask yourselves whether the gifts that were given to men because Christ has ascended on high and has led captivity captive, can mean those which degrade nine-tenths of men into brutes, that a little fraction of them may be raised into gods.

But have we not avoided that danger by speaking of these gifts of the Spirit as belonging only to the first age of the Church, and as being withdrawn so soon as the mission of Jesus and His apostles had been sufficiently proved? I do not see that we have in the least avoided *this* danger, of exalting certain persons and of proportionally depressing the whole kind; and I think we have incurred other dangers about as terrible. We have not escaped the conceit and insolence which accompany priestcraft; we have only altered the objects of it. Men have special talents, which they sometimes from an old superstition call gifts. They are conscious that they have. They are told not to refer them to any inspiration of God. They have no reason therefore to feel that they serve any purpose, but to exalt them above their fellows. The weaker become merely inflated; the stronger become tyrants, over a circle narrower or wider. What signifies the variety of gifts, if all are turned into an excuse for pretension and rivalry; if none are regarded as qualifications for awful ministries, as trusts for which we must give account?

Meantime we have been misrepresenting the gifts

which we suppose were confined to the Apostolical age, as much as we have been abusing our own. What was the special Pentecostal gift? The power of speaking to men of different tribes concerning the wonderful works of God. Surely such a power was a sign that a barrier was broken down, not that a new barrier was raised; that human beings were all treated as having a relation to God as to each other, not that a few were admitted to an intercourse from which the rest were excluded; that the most divine and sacred language is the most common language, not that a few are glorified by discovering their unlikeness to the majority. What were these powers of healing? "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth," in the name of Him Who was exalted that He might be the Head of every man, so they spoke to the cripple at the gate of the Temple, "rise up and walk." It was a sign that the Lord and Giver of Health, the Lord and Giver of Life, was stronger than the powers of disease and death, and those might in His strength be defied. What were the powers which fitted them to preach, to govern, to baptize, to give the bread and wine of life? All were of the same character. All pointed to the coming in of a universal human dispensation; all "*were for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*"

Can words be more expressive? What can they signify, if they do not signify that these gifts were to carry the Apostles altogether beyond themselves; were to make them servants of that generation and of all generations? What can they signify, but that the gifts of which they had the first-fruits were for all times; that their grandeur consisted in their adaptation to the circumstances of men in every region of the earth?

How much truer, then, has been the common faith, the common joy, which Whitsuntide has called forth in one country and another, Romish and Protestant, than the limitations which Romanists and Protestants have each discovered for it! What a deep faith then has been in the hearts of men, not due to the learning of doctors and casuists, but setting it at nought and rising above it; that Christ, "having gone up on high," has indeed "received gifts for men!" What we have to desire is, that this faith should be no longer a mere blind faith, that it should be able to justify itself; as it will do, when the plain facts of human life are brought side by side with the express words of Scripture, and they are used to interpret each other. We have amongst us, in various measures, gifts of speech, gifts of healing, gifts of government. As might be expected, as ought to be the case, if there is such an order as St. Paul speaks of, they are distributed to different persons; some are almost wanting in treasures with which others are richly endowed. But speech itself, that wonderful mystery, the sign of

our fellowship with each other, the sign of our relation to a spiritual world, as much as our sight and hearing and touch are the sign of our relation to an external world; this is a common inheritance; this poor and rich, high and low, share together. The great misery of us all is, that we do not appreciate the awfulness of these gifts, what is implied in the possession of them, what responsibilities to man and to God they lay us under. The worth of the special gifts is measured by the money they will bring in; more refined and less practical spirits prefer the rewards of vanity to those of pelf. The general gift is turned to the uses of slander and lying. The words which proceed from Him Whose name is the Word of God, are declared by the wise of the earth, who generalize their maxims from what they see and do, to be counters which we may traffic with as we will; instruments for concealing the thoughts which they are to embody. What can scatter such opinions and the acts which establish them and flow from them? What can make us honest and true, not in some extraordinary sense, but in the commonest sense which those epithets can bear? Nothing, I think, but that enlightening of the eyes of the understanding which St. Paul desired for the Ephesians, that we may perceive the greatness of our calling, the reality and nature of our gifts, the law under which they must be exercised, the power that is present with us at every moment, to quicken us and direct us in the use of

them. Has the thought ever flashed upon us in any hour of our lives:—"The words which I learned in my nursery were not lies; there has been a Spirit with me by night and day. It is the Spirit of God Himself: He has been enabling me to use those powers which I have been continually inclined to waste. He has prompted me to turn the powers to the service of right and truth which I would have sold to selfishness and falsehood. He has given me every true social impulse. He has reminded me of a Father from whose house I have strayed, of a Family of which I am a member, of a Kingdom of righteousness and love of which I have been made an heir." If such a thought has dawned upon us even for a moment, have we not been certain for that moment: "It must be true; if all things else should prove deceitful and unreal, that will be brought forth in full manifestation by the fires of the last day." And is it not then true for all moments as well as that one? Is it not the truth of our lives? the truth which makes life more than a fleeting shadow; the truth which can enable us to bear up under the thought of an Eternal Substance, with which we are every moment in contact?

Yes! the assurance that the Pentecostal gifts are not withdrawn, that we are all receiving them every day fresh from Him Who first bestowed them, would not, taken by itself, be a joyful assurance; it would be an overwhelming one. The sense of such a stew-

ardship brings with it the recollection of an unfaithfulness that no words of confession are adequate to utter, for which no acts of repentance can make amends. But there is an assurance beneath this. It was expressed in the latter clause of that verse in the Psalm from which St. Paul's words are quoted, "*That the Lord God might dwell among them.*" This is the Pentecostal *revelation,* which alone makes the Pentecostal *gifts* intelligible or blessed. The Spirit of God is dwelling amongst us, is dwelling in us. The rain and the dew are apt symbols of His *influences;* but they do not denote that Living and Personal Presence, that abiding Friend and Comforter Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who is the bond of their unalterable union, Who claims men as heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. The truth that He is *the* gift which the Son, when He had ascended on high and led captivity captive, received for men, is the truth of which the Holy Catholic Church exists to bear witness. Churches have dared invert the order of God's revelation, to transpose the articles of the Creed. They have placed the faith in the Church first, in the Holy Ghost second. They have made the Spirit dependent upon the body which He quickens; not the body upon the Spirit. So the divine gifts have been shrivelled into enchantment and tricks of legerdemain. So men have been taught to shut God out of His own universe, and to suppose that He was exercising no real government over their

acts, confining Him to certain sudden and casual and trivial interferences with the course of Nature and with human affairs. So Science has been divorced from Faith, and the empire of Chance set up to subvert the Kingdom of Heaven. Those who have sown this wind will reap the whirlwind. They who are to be witnesses that God's divine order has triumphed over the magicians and soothsayers which had counterfeited it, have adopted the arts of the magicians and soothsayers. They will meet with a race of new adepts and conjurors, who will be too strong for them, and will leap on them and overcome them. "*Jesus they knew, and Paul they knew, but who are these,*" that in the name of Jesus and of Paul practise devilries instead of casting out devils?

Nor can we escape that same danger. The faith in spiritual agency is so strong in the hearts of men, that the most resolute and the most scoffing materialism cannot cope with it. The wit of the eighteenth century could banish the Gospel from the *salons* and the seats of learning; but it could not prevent Cagliostro from entering into either. The money-worship of the nineteenth century may prove a more effectual antagonist of the Gospel than wit ever was or can be; but will it hinder, is it hindering, the growth of spiritual impostures? Are they not growing up under its influence? Are they not beginning to form a portion of its services?

To proclaim the Spirit of Truth against these spirits

of lies,—to proclaim that the Spirit is verily with us and striving with us, cultivating all the faculties He has conferred, bringing us to repentance, seeking to mould us after God's image, seeking to make us helpers and not destroyers of each other,—this is the work that is left to the Church, this is the one hope for the age. And it is a good hope, a hope that will not make us ashamed. For it blends with the deepest convictions of other times; it meets the deepest necessities of this. Pentecost taught the Jews to shout at the miracle of seeds that lay deep in the earth springing up and bearing fruit in God's appointed season, according to His beautiful order; taught them to connect this with that Law which He gave to men, the law which was to order their paths. Whitsuntide preserves both lessons and translates them into a higher. The Spirit Who first brooded over the darkness and made it pregnant, quickens from hour to hour whatever looks dead, brings what is hidden to light. That Spirit writes God's laws in men's hearts, that they may be His people, and He may be their God. Do we not want such a quickener of our death, such a guide out of restlessness into calmness and peace? Do we not need such a One to remind us of God's law day by day, to fix it, to fix Him in our inmost affections? Are we not in need of One Who shall prick us in the heart and make us cry together, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Are we not in need of One Who shall answer that cry which He

has raised, as no human lips can answer it; by working in us to will and do of all God's good pleasure? Will not the belief that such a One has been given and is with us still, after it has wrought in us a godly repentance, give us that joy and singleness of heart in our common duties, in our daily feasts, which the disciples experienced when they had learned to call nothing their own, but to call God their Father, and all men their brothers?

Trinity Sunday.

June 7, 1857.

ROMANS XII. 2.

"AND BE NOT CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD: BUT BE YE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND, THAT YE MAY PROVE WHAT IS THAT GOOD, AND ACCEPTABLE, AND PERFECT WILL OF GOD."

"You preachers tell us that we ought to give up our own wills and to do the Will of God. But how are we to find out what that will is?" A man who asks this question (how many are asking it!) receives various answers. One tells him that the Will of God is fully declared in Holy Scripture. There he will find it set forth in language which the most ignorant can understand. He replies perhaps that he has got the Scriptures, that he has read them from childhood, that he has been urged to do so by his parents and teachers. But each day he hears of new opinions about these Scriptures, of interpretations adopted as indisputable by one man or school or Church, which are rejected as monstrous by another man or school or Church. Who is to tell him which of them is right, which expresses that Will he is to obey? He meets with some

who are delighted that he should have experienced this perplexity. "Does it not show you," they ask, "the need of some authority to pronounce on the meaning of Scripture? Does it not show that the Bible is useless without the Church?" The next question then of necessity is, "And where is that? What is this authority which can tell me and will tell me what I am to believe, and what I am to reject? And suppose I can discover it, how will it enable me to make the explanation which is ascertained to be the right one bear upon the complications of my life? How shall David's experience about himself, how shall St. Paul's admonitions to Ephesians or Corinthians show me what I am to be and to do, here in London in the year 1857?" Again there are persons who listen with immense satisfaction to the statement of this difficulty. "It is driving you," they exclaim, "to seek for a guide who shall pronounce upon present emergencies, who shall not merely speak in generalities. We want an infallible voice to tell the whole Church what it is to believe at all times and in each time. *You* want a particular director of your conscience, to whom you may render simple and implicit deference in every one of your own embarrassments. With these, the Bible and the Church may be of the greatest avail to you. Without them, the system is broken and imperfect; it stands aloof from you, it does not affect your individual feelings and actions, it does not connect them with those of the whole society."

My brethren, any one of these three replies appears to him who makes it far more practical and satisfactory than the one which St. Paul gives in the text. To say, "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed, that ye may prove what is that acceptable and perfect Will of God," strikes the anxious inquirer as much less ready and manageable a solution of his difficulties than the precepts "Read the Bible," "Attend to the Church," "Accept a Pope," "Submit your conscience and reason to a Spiritual Director."

But when he has tried the efficacy of one or all of these commands, he will discover that something is wanting still; that he has not yet got to the root of the matter. He must begin again from the beginning, and find out what that is; or my Bible, my Church, my Pope, my Spiritual Director will all fail to show him what the Will of God is, or how he may obey it.

Whence comes this necessity? It comes from this: the more exactly we are told what we are to do, the more we determine to do it, the more we find that obedience belongs to something within, which has power to say, "The words of no book, of no authority coming from the past, of no mortal teacher, speaking to me with ever so much weight of traditional reverence, can determine me, can bring me into real living subjection. I may use great effort to give up myself, to abdicate all sovereignty, to be a

pupil, a child, a slave. But the very effort is an effort of will. I assert my choice in making it. I was never so haughty as when I was stooping to that government. And each new step of apparent deference and self-surrender is in fact a new plea for this self-will and self-assertion. I may at last become a stone; all consciousness, all affection may perish in me. But till I reach that ideal condition, I shall be still a rebel. My lips, my hands, may be obedient; I myself shall be resisting."

I. Now consider the doctrine of St. Paul, as it is set forth in the passage I have read to you and in all his epistles, and see whether it meets your case better or worse than the prescriptions of these different Protestant and Romish doctors meet it. It is the Will of God you have to obey: they all agree in telling you that. It is the Will of God which is set forth in Scripture; the Will of God which is interpreted by the Church; the Will of God which you are to recognize in a Pope; the Will of God which you are to stoop to in a dictator over your individual conscience. Well, the Bible confesses, the Church confesses that this Will is working, not indirectly, but directly upon you, upon yourself, upon that very thing within you which you had to muzzle, even to kill, before you could arrive even at the semblance of obedience. Do your Pope and your spiritual director not say this? Do they hide this truth from you? Do they tell you that the Spirit of God is not with

you, not acting upon you to bring you into conformity with the Will of God? Then be sure they are liars. You are bound to consider them so. You are bound to tell them so. For they are setting themselves against the very truth of which they are sent to testify. They are denying the Creed. They are saying that the Spirit of God has not come into the world to convince men of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. They are undermining the Church of which they profess to be the champions and guardians. But do they tell you that the Spirit has come, that you have been baptized into His Name, that the Creed has not been mocking you? Believe them then, and act upon the belief. And say to them, "That which you cannot do, in that you are very weak, and can only speak to my outward ear, and can only influence my outward services (for if you do more than this, you do it by the power of God's Spirit), that which you cannot do, this Spirit is doing. He is acting upon me, upon myself, upon my will, that I may perceive and know what that perfect and acceptable Will of God is, and that I may be brought into conformity with it."

II. When first we meet with such expressions as these, "conformed to the world," "transformed by the renewing of our mind," we may suppose that St. Paul is speaking of a state of mind which is suitable to us as inhabitants of this present earth, and of some other state which may prepare us for what is to

come after death. But this is a very imperfect and slovenly method of explaining his language. The man who is in conformity with this world is not the man who understands this world best, not the man who admires the beauties of it most, not the man even who can adapt himself best to all its various circumstances and conditions. He is too much a slave of the things he sees to reflect upon them or look into the meaning of them; too much devoted to all outward shows and enjoyments to have an apprehension of their secret loveliness and harmony; too much shut up in the habits and customs of the particular class and society into which he chances to be thrown, to have any power of entering into the feelings and circumstances of those who lie beyond it. The word "conformed" is used very strictly; it implies that he takes his form from the things about him, that they are the mould into which his mind is cast. Now this St. Paul will not for an instant admit to be the form which any man is created to bear. He maintains, as all the Bible maintains, that man is created in the image of God; that the form of his mind is to be derived from his unseen Parent, and not from the things which are put in subjection under him. This was true always. The heathen who was bowing to idols of wood and stone was resisting the conscience which told him that he was God's offspring; God was testifying to him in his heart by the very things which he saw of His invisible power

and Godhead; and it was in opposition to this witness, that he worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator. But we, who have been redeemed out of this worship, who have been adopted as God's children, whom He has sealed with His Spirit, that we may know Him, and live in Him,—we are striving far more directly and consciously against this Spirit; we are choosing a false way when we admit the world to govern and fashion our minds according to its pleasure, when we submit to receive its image and superscription. That image and superscription will vary in each new age, in each new locality; it is the very nature and law of the world to be continually changing, to have no permanent principle. That is the reason why it is so ignominious a thing for a man to be conformed to it: he must abandon all his prerogative of looking before and after; he must become merely a creature of today; he must be fluctuating, capricious, insincere,—a leaf carried about by every gale, floating down every current. How is it possible that such a one can know anything of the Will of God, which is fixed, eternal, capable of no accidents? What signifies it that you give to such a one the Bible, that you teach him to read it, that you persuade him it is a divine book? You may persuade him of that as easily as of anything else; if it is the current opinion of the time and place in which he grows up, of course he receives it, until the fashion alters, and the same maxim which led him to revere the book teaches him

to scoff at it. But while he embraces it, and reckons every letter sacred, what does he gather from it respecting the Will of God and his own life? They are only viewed by the rules and maxims of the society about him. That measures and determines the words of Lawgivers and Prophets; that tells him how he shall interpret and apply the sentences of Him who spake as never man spake, how he shall judge the Judge of the whole earth. What signifies it that you help out the Bible with a long series of Church decrees? These decrees are still referred to the same ultimate court of appeal. The opinion of the day, or that opinion of the day—that fraction of the general public judgment to which he has conformed and surrendered himself,—fixes what he shall think of these decrees; he only knows them as they come to him refracted in its definitions and practices. And what is the infallible Dogmatist, what is the Spiritual Guide, but the habits and maxims of the time or the party personified and embodied? He whose mind is conformed to this world, finds in them its authorized spokesmen, the utterers of its latest oracle, of its safes trule of conduct, sent by the god of this world to save him from the effort of thought, of belief,—from the necessity of being a man.

III. The deliverance from the conformity to the world which is of this nature and has these effects is the transformation which is spoken of in the next clause of the verse. That transformation—we may say it

boldly—instead of unfitting a man for the world, is that which alone can enable him to live in it, to appreciate the worth of it, to exercise an influence over it. It was this which enabled the prophet to see the trees and the floods breaking forth into singing; it was this which enabled St. Paul to become all things to all men; it was this which enabled St. John to see the kingdom of God and of His Christ emerging out of the kingdoms of this world. For they beheld all things in God's light, not in the false lights of this world. They saw the world as He had made it, not as men had made it by rebelling against Him. They had received the true form of men, they could therefore use the forms of the world just as they found them convenient, accommodating themselves readily to Jewish, Greek, Roman customs,—never being brought into bondage by any, never contracting their spirits by the temporary vesture which they wore. They were in communion with the eternal, members of a spiritual eternal fellowship; so they could contemplate the great drama of history, not as a succession of shifting scenes, but as a series of events tending to a divine catastrophe; to the fulfilment of that Will which is seeking good and good only.

IV. The process of this transformation St. Paul describes as the renewing of the mind. Such a phrase at once suggests the change which takes place when the foliage of spring covers the bare boughs of winter. It is not strictly a recovery of that which

had been lost. The substance is not altered, but it is quickened. The alteration is the most wonderful that can be conceived of, but it all passes within. It is not sudden, but gradual. The power once given works secretly, probably amidst many obstructions from sharp winds and keen frosts. Still that beginning contains in it the sure prophecy of final accomplishment. The man will be renewed according to the image of his Creator and Father, because the Spirit of his Creator and Father is working in him.

V. That was the lesson of last Sunday. That was the Pentecostal gift and revelation. We have advanced a step further today. We have thanked God, Who has enabled us to confess the glory of the Eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity. How were those who first used this prayer enabled to confess the glory of the Eternal Trinity? Did they discover this doctrine in the Bible by a careful collation of texts? Did they learn it from some dogmatist or spiritual director? Were they led simply to accept certain words which had nothing corresponding to them in their hearts and reasons? Were these crushed under the chariot-wheels of some infallible Juggernaut? Must we attain to our confession by the same means? I believe the men who wrote this prayer were able to confess the glory of the Eternal Trinity, because they sought first of all in the simplest acts of their lives not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of

their minds. So long as they were conformed to the world, they sought God in the multitude of objects which they saw about them. The heavens above, the earth beneath, the waters under the earth, told them what His likeness was. But a voice said to their hearts: "You have a Father, a Father of your spirits. Turn from these things that you see, to Him. Seek Him from whom you have wandered; He is not far from you. He is seeking you." The voice said to them: "Through Me, through that Word Who is holding converse with your hearts and consciences, you may find this Father. I am the way to Him. I have taken your flesh and dwelt among men, that they may know what I am, and what He is; how distinct We are, how entirely We are one; that they may know the Father through the Son." The voice said to them: "You cannot know the Father and the Son, unless the Spirit of the Father and the Son be working in you, working in you to transform your will to His Will; to bring your reason into submission to His perfect Reason." So they were led to confess the glory of the Eternal Trinity. And by the same process, and no other, shall we be led to the same result, shall we be enabled to make the same confession. Not by studying words or repeating words, but by entering into the divine life; not by exalting our wills and reasons to grasp at some difficult conclusion, but by seeking the simplicity and humility of the little child, of the true man of science; not by subjecting

our wills and reasons before some human authority, but by embracing that freedom and expansiveness which God promised, do we become sharers of the faith once delivered to the saints. And how did they learn in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity? They felt how divided, broken, at strife their hearts were, how strifes within led to strifes without; how impossible it was to obtain unity for themselves, or unity for the world. They asked God to make them one. They found it was His Will to make them one. They found His Spirit had taught them the prayer for Unity which they poured forth. They discovered that He must be the Author of all Peace and Unity in their own selves and in the societies of men. They found that it must be in the Unity of the Spirit that the Father and the Son rejoice together for ever. So were they enabled in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity. May we learn the secret as they learnt it! May we discover and ever hold fast the faith that the Father, the Son, the Spirit, is the God of Everlasting Love and Charity, the One God blessed for ever! May that Everlasting Love and Charity shine forth in us, that we may glorify our Father in Heaven, as He was revealed perfectly in the Only-Begotten Son, as He reveals Himself by His Spirit in the children of His adoption! May they be taught how to enter into that Unity which fills the spirits about the throne with all their wonder, and worship, and joy!

First Sunday after Trinity.

June 14, 1857.

PSALM CXXXI. (*Prayer-book Version.*)

"LORD, I AM NOT HIGH-MINDED; I HAVE NO PROUD LOOKS. I DO NOT EXERCISE MYSELF IN GREAT MATTERS, WHICH ARE TOO HIGH FOR ME. BUT I REFRAIN MY SOUL, AND KEEP IT LOW, LIKE AS A CHILD THAT IS WEANED FROM ITS MOTHER; YEA, MY SOUL IS EVEN AS A WEANED CHILD. O ISRAEL, TRUST IN THE LORD, FROM THIS TIME FORTH FOR EVERMORE."

AFTER this Psalm, as after every other, we join in the ascription, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." We praise and worship the Trinity in Unity.

Now is not that exercising ourselves in great matters? Is not this Name altogether too high for us? If we refrained our souls and kept them low, should we intrude into these mysteries? If our souls were as weaned children, would they not be content to feed on the practical portions of divinity? Should not we leave the doctrines which the Creeds teach, to those who have been gnawing the crusts and dry bones of theology till they can find nourishment in nothing else?

So many have thought; but not all. There have been those who have learnt from this Psalm what the *Gloria Patri* has to do with all the Psalms. While they have meditated upon it and wished to enter into it,—while the words, "*I am not high-minded, I have no proud looks,*" have seemed to put them at an immeasurable distance from the writer, and have made them wonder where he can have discovered the secret of such submission,—while they have almost despaired of a time ever coming when they shall cease to be feverish and restless, and occupied with things too high for them,—this Name has sounded in their ears as a witness of substantial peace, of continual life, of unending hope; as an assurance that what was true in the days of the Psalmist is true now, and will be true world without end; as a uniting band between the lonely sufferer and the whole Church, militant and triumphant; as an abyss of love into which they could cast themselves and the Universe. I believe also that we may have a test of the connection between the Psalm and the ascription, which is not derived from the experience of simple worshipers, taught from their childhood to love the forms of the Church, wont to associate them with their own sorrows and hopes. I believe we may find in persons most different from each other in habits and opinions (alike chiefly in this, that they all regard our creeds and worship with suspicion and alienation) proofs how in acquiring the temper of this Psalm, they learn also

by degrees to know why we acknowledge the Trinity, in what power we worship the Unity.

I. I begin with those in whom this feeling of dislike to the Church and its Creeds was strongest in the last century, and is not perhaps the weakest now. I suppose a man who has devoted himself to the study of Nature; who has pursued it with a deep, fervent, passionate love; who will not be kept back from it by any warnings of moralists, that it behoves him to be thinking more of man than of the involuntary universe, or of divines, that he should be occupying himself about his own soul. He is sure that his calling is to investigate the meaning of the things which he sees; he is sure that he is following truth, and that no one has a right to tell him he shall not follow her through whatever labyrinths she may lead him. He has listened, and listened reverently, to the words of Natural Theologians who tell him that wherever he searches he will find marks of design, tokens of a living and intelligent Creator. He confesses that he does find the most wonderful adaptation of organs and functions to specific uses. But he refuses to be limited in his discoveries by these observations. It is inconsistent with his notion of science to twist facts that they may give forth a moral. And he cannot pretend that there are not times when he is utterly unable to discern that exact proportion of means to ends, which Paley and his school would have him always look for. At times he is haunted with a vision

of something much grander, deeper, in the order of the universe, than any such arrangements could express. The teeming, ever-renewing life, vegetable and animal, on the earth and in the deep, the mysterious powers which are endlessly at work, the original forms which represent themselves in such wonderful variety, all baffle the inquirer who had been told that the world was formed by a perfect Mechanist, Who has suffered nothing to exist which has not some precise and definite use. Is it not better to find some general term which will represent the productive energies and processes of the world, than to assume some existence which stands wholly aloof from them? Is it not enough to speak of Nature? Has the physical student any need of GOD?

I know, my brethren, that this perplexity has led many, and does lead many, very near the gulf of atheism. And yet there is such a faithful, humble, reverent spirit in the true searcher of Nature; his very unwillingness to strain evidence or to use religious names when he has not the sense of a reality corresponding to them, is such a sign of grace, that I do not know whether the glimpse which he must sometimes take into that dreadful void, and the consciousness of its nearness to him, may not be one of God's best gifts to him, may not be a step to the fuller and clearer revelation of Himself. How that has come, in cases not a few, I think I may venture, though not without fear and trembling, to describe.

The man who knows, by inward signs and promptings, that he is meant to seek for the laws and principles which rule the kingdom of Nature, and all the secret methods of its government, cannot desert that calling; but he may find that he stands in relations to human beings even more wonderful than those in which he stands to all the things which are the subjects of his experiments. He cannot mix these relations with those; he is sure they are generically different. There comes a time when the difference presents itself to him with mighty force. It may be with a delightful force. The birth of a child may give a joy such as the discovery of a planet could not give. Or it may be a terrible force. The death of a child may darken the face of earth and sky, and make him feel for awhile as if it signified nothing to him whether they exist with laws or without them; whether the myriads of creatures which dwell in them are watched over and kept alive, or drop at once into perdition. A frightful conclusion to rest in! Is there no escape from it? Through that feeling of childhood and fatherhood, in the utter desolation which follows when the bond seems to be snapped, is there not the dawn of a new discovery; is there not the vision of a new Name? The student cannot "exercise himself in great matters;" he is overwhelmed with the questions which present themselves when he thinks of *Creation*. But is not a FATHER more than a Creator? If the world can live without

the one, can *he* live without the other? That is the first all-embracing question. Another may lie hidden in it, some day to be brought forth, and to connect itself with his old studies, and to make them new. May not that Father be the Creator? May not the love and tenderness of a Father explain those designs, those adaptations, those varieties of form, better than the ingenuity of an architect? *That*, I say, is a hint for further development, when he has recovered strength; *this* meets him at once in his weakness and helplessness. His soul is a child weaned from its mother earth, brought to confess that it needs a Father in Heaven. Where he first heard that Name, he can scarcely tell. It sounds old, yet to him it is surely fresh and bright as a morning in early spring. Did he find it in the New Testament? It certainly is here. He hears passages in the Sermon on the Mount where it is repeated very often. Jesus Christ spoke it as it had not been spoken before. That perhaps is all, or nearly all, he has yet realized about the Gospels or Him Who is spoken of in them. Much of them he does not understand; whether he can strictly say that he accepts them as divine, he does not know. Let me go further, and make another very probable supposition. In his longing for some worship, for some way of confessing this Father, he may attach himself to those who vehemently reject our Creeds, who say that we dishonour the name of the Father, and set at nought the Unity of God by

our Doxology. He thinks these teachers less exacting than others; they seem to assert what he has ascertained, and to oppose what looks to him like a contradiction of it. I do not inquire at present how long he rests in this conclusion; I only assume that he carries his scientific earnestness with him, and that if he finds he cannot hold that which he has apprehended, without yielding to convictions that are now strange to him, he will open his mind and heart to them also.

II. And now let us pass to a man who cares little for physics or physical theology; though more for them than for the authority or traditions of the Church national or the Church Catholic. He has spent his youth carelessly; has obeyed random impulses; has treated religious people contemptuously; has had occasional misgivings and compunctions, which he has stifled as quickly as he could. He is startled by some sudden calamity, or the voice of some preacher. He becomes conscious, not of faults, but of sin. He has committed it, and he is the servant of it. The yoke is heavy, and he cannot break it. He hears of a Deliverer: he is told of a Lord who came down from heaven, and died for sinners, and rose again. He is told that he may believe in that Saviour, and that so believing, he will be a justified and new man. The message commends itself to his conscience. He may have heard it before, —now it has a meaning for him; it is what he is in need of. He cannot be deceived; this faith does give

him the victory over the evil which has hitherto overpowered him.

This faith at first is sufficient for him. He asks for nothing more. He can live upon it and die upon it. The Bible sets forth the Saviour to him. For that he prizes it. If it speaks of anything else, *that* he does not understand, or in his heart care for. The Sermon on the Mount is not very much to him. No continuous Scripture record is very much to him, except perhaps the life of some man who has passed through struggles, a few of which he has himself experienced. But texts which set forth the blessings of those who believe in Jesus the Crucified, he lays up in his memory and feeds on in his heart.

This state of feeling is a happy one; he supposes it is to endure for ever, even though he takes no pains to sustain it by thought and reflection. By degrees he discovers his mistake; a number of questions present themselves to him which he had not considered. The Bible raises them; the teachers, whom he values most for their sympathy, do not permit him to forget them. What means that redemption in which he has been reposing so simply? Was it not for others as well as for him? For whom, then? What made it necessary? Great matters for a poor man to exercise himself with; often they seem too high for him. He adopts a theory, that he may escape from them. *A scheme of divinity*, which declares why God must have inflicted endless punishments on him, unless Jesus

had interposed to deliver him from His wrath, and had offered Himself as his substitute, takes the place of that *faith* which had raised him out of moral evil. The scheme touches at many points on his conscience; at some, upon his heart; all its arrangements are devised to satisfy the restless cravings of his understanding. He adopts it as the only security for that trust in Christ as the Saviour from sin, which is becoming feeble in him; he is confident that he holds it firmly, because he defends it fiercely against all impugners.

He too has kinsmen and friends; in the first fervour of his belief he would have drawn them all in to share it with him, as no less true for them than for him; in his second stage he begins to congratulate himself on his difference from them. A time comes of weakness, bodily or mental, or both; a time when past evils start before him again; a time when he has stings of conscience for being high-minded and for having proud looks. He cannot recollect the arguments and conclusions which he thought proved him to have a stronger standing-ground than those about him. A stern Lawgiver frowns upon him from the Heaven above. He longs to be sure that the Mediator has delivered him from the demands of that Lawgiver. While he is seeking that comfort, an awful thought scares him: "Do I *wish* to meet such a Being as this? Do I long to wake up after *His* likeness? Does it satisfy me that *I* am protected

from Him? Can I bear to think that all mankind is left to His vengeance?"

Oh, brethren, there is a pit of Atheism near to this man as there was to the other! He too must look down into it! He too may be led by that fearful vision to a calmer, humbler faith than he ever had before! For what name is this which meets his eye at every turn, as he turns despairingly over the New Testament, in hopes of finding something that may soothe his anguish? Jesus calls Himself a Son. Did that never strike him before? Nor these words: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father"? Nor these: "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me), that I might do Thy will, O God"? Nor these: "For I came down from Heaven not to do My own will, but the Will of Him that sent Me"? Nor these: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them"? Yes! he has heard all these texts a thousand times. He thought that he believed them. He was always provided with an explanation of them, which enabled him to hold his system, and yet to acknowledge them as inspired. But now he is too feeble for such explanations. He wants the thing that was explained. He wants to know that God is verily and indeed not different in Will and Nature from Him who died upon the Cross. He wants to feel that he is reconciled *to* God, not delivered *from* God. He wants to feel that the God who loves him, loves the world.

Here then is one who by becoming a child, by being weaned from notions and systems, learns with heart and soul to give glory to the *Son*. I do not assume that he therefore accepts our creed and our worship. Perhaps he may still retain a jealousy of both. Perhaps he may think that a truth, which it has cost him such an effort to reach, cannot be one that surrounds all, even the most unconscious. Perhaps he determines to hold by the sect, whatever it may be, in which he was brought up, or that to which he was drawn, when he first perceived that the Gospel of Christ had anything to do with him. Let us leave him for the present, satisfied that he will not be suffered to rest till all which is involved in the acknowledgment of a Divine Son has become his in very deed.

III. But though both the persons I have described belong to our time, neither, I think, is so characteristic of it as the one I am to speak of next. The power of the Spirit which could set men free from the bondage of the letter and of outward rules was asserted strongly by Cromwell's Ironsides. The proclamation took another, and, after their first excesses, a specially peaceful form in the followers of George Fox. The early Methodists affirmed that only this power could awaken inert multitudes, bound with the chain of evil habits, to a true life. The man I am imagining has considered the records of these different bodies. He admits that fanaticism, of one sort or other, might be reasonably charged upon each. But

he says that those clergymen or laymen, who thought they could dispose of these teachers or of their influence by denouncing their fanaticism knew very little of human beings generally, or of themselves particularly; that they were hoodwinked by the formalities and conventions of their childhood. "Had they not wisdom to discover," he asks, "that man is a spiritual being, affected much more powerfully by that which speaks to his spirit than by all mechanical agencies whatsoever? To be sure these Independents, Quakers, Methodists, were ignorant of that fact in the length and breadth of it. They supposed that some peculiar gift had been bestowed upon them; they thought of a Spirit coming down from heaven to inspire preachers or convert sinners. That opinion you Churchmen may confute, if you are sure that you are clear of it yourselves. But poets and artists are as much interested as the wildest sects in maintaining that men are subjects of spiritual influences, and communicate spiritual influences to each other."

On this true observation—this undoubted conviction—he builds his scheme of life. He tries to open his soul to all spiritual influences; he tries to exert spiritual influences over his fellows. Whatever is not material, whatever cannot be measured by a money standard, he accounts spiritual. It would be difficult to convict him of error in that classification. But if it is so, all stormy passions are spiritual. Hatred is spiritual. Envy is spiritual. It is no play upon words;

no mere theory. The man feels more and more the impossibility of making any distinction. He is above conventions and formalities; they are not to determine for him what is right or what is wrong. What is to determine? Do the distinctions exist? May he establish them for himself? He half thinks that he may. He does not see what other authority there can be, or, if there is, how its decrees can reach him. Is he not virtually his own lawgiver, his own God?

This is a third kind of Atheism. Which of us dares say that he knows nothing of it? that it has never tempted him into its icy caverns? And how may any one be delivered from it? The processes may be various; generally they will be severe. This man may find that he is *not* superior to rules and conventions; that he is as much their victim as any of his neighbours; that they bind him all the faster because he fancies he is at liberty and is choosing for himself; or he may find that the appetites which he, the spiritual man, was to rule, do in fact rule him. Or he may perceive that he is actually selling those spiritual powers, which were to raise him above the pursuit of gold, for so much gold. Or the most terrible revelation of all may be made to him, that whether the distinction between good and evil is real or fantastic, there is in him a growing preference for that which he has been used to call evil, a growing dislike for that which he has been used to call good.

If his eyes are opened to any of these painful facts,

there comes with it a sense of the impotency of that spirit, that will, which has been lifting itself so high; a consciousness of degradation, a disposition to self-mockery. These tempers are very unlike that which our Psalmist speaks of; yet they may be the road to it. The lofty spiritualist may begin to think that it would be a blessing beyond all price if he could cast away his proud looks; if he could refrain his soul and keep it low; if he could wean it from food which has made it so bloated and so sickly. But how may this be? What can work this transformation? He travels the old ground again; he asks what those sects which he used to defend against us and our formalism meant by a Spirit *that was given* to them? Was it after all something different from that spirit in man which he has been asserting, and for which they seemed to have little regard? He opens the book from which they professed to derive their teaching. He finds the promise of a Baptism with the HOLY Spirit. He finds this Spirit carefully contrasted with evil and unclean spirits, which are said by His power to be cast out. He reads in St. Paul of this Spirit of *God* bearing witness with *our* spirit that we are sons of God. He reads in the same St. Paul of this Spirit of God knowing the things of God, as the spirit of man knows the things of a man. He discovers that all gifts by which one man is distinguished from another are referred to this Spirit as their source. But he discovers no narrow limitations assigned to the presence

of the Spirit. "It is for you," says St. Peter, "and for your children, and for as many as the Lord your God shall call." He hears this Spirit called the Spirit of Truth, who will guide him into all Truth. He hears it said that we are baptized into one Spirit, whether we be Jews or Greeks, bond or free. He hears of this Spirit helping our infirmities, and praying in us according to the will of God.

Here are strange words. A little while ago they would have been passed over heedlessly, or treated as Oriental descriptions of certain conditions of humanity, which we in the West have investigated much more thoroughly, and can explain much more accurately. Now they come to him as filling up blanks in these western explanations, which render them practically useless, and even false. They do not make a huge demand upon his faith. They speak to his want of faith, his want of strength, his want of will. They bear witness of One Who he is sure has always been near him, awakening him to faith, making him conscious of his weakness, working in him to will and to do. It is not news of a spiritual influence, but of the Source of spiritual influences; not the announcement that men are and must be the subjects of *some* influence, but how they may discriminate between the vile and precious; how they may be right within, not the slaves to conventions or to their own lust of independence; how they may know God, in whose image they are formed, and so know themselves; how

they may worship God, and so not worship themselves.

This man then learns to say, "'Glory to the Holy Ghost,' Who has rescued me from low conceits, that looked high and glorious, Who has undertaken to refrain and govern my soul, and to make it free, which left to itself is always choosing some new and bitterer kind of servitude." Still, it may be, he holds fast by his old hatred of forms. If he is not satisfied with the quiet spiritualism of the Quaker, or the noisy spiritualism of the Revivalist; if they seem to him narrow, and mixed with the formality he dreads, he probably stands aloof from all sects and Churches, waiting for some perfectly spiritual Church to develope itself. Let him only wait with a real longing, perhaps he will have a vision of one as pure, as large, as spiritual, as his heart or reason can desire.

IV. Once more. It is surely no great stretch of fancy to suppose that these three persons, with their different tastes, opinions, and destinies, were friends in youth; that they had conversed freely in their early years on all the questions which interested them most; that afterwards, when their minds were formed and hardened, their intercourse became suspicious; each fastening some hard name upon the other; vehement arguments to shake each other's conclusions being succeeded by that cautious reserve, that elaborate selection of indifferent topics, which is more fatal to friendship even than the roughness and weariness of

disputation. Now if, after each had gone through the schooling I have imagined for him, they met once more, I cannot help thinking that the desire of confuting, and the disposition to regard each other as aliens with whom communion was impossible, would be equally far from all three. The old sympathy, I apprehend, would revive, and would be deepened, not weakened, by the experiences of manhood. Gradually they discover that each has learnt something which he cannot part with, but which he would gladly impart, and the others would gladly share. They have not travelled the same road; their roads started apparently from a different point, they have been tending apparently to a different goal. And yet—they have a sense that there is some shady city of palm-trees, which they are all approaching, and which is to be the bourne and the reward of their pilgrimage. Whence comes this sense? What is their common attraction? Each has spelled out one syllable of that Name in which they are living and moving and having their being. And he that has faintly but truly acknowledged the Father, perceives that he cannot know the Father but in the Son. And he that has seen in the Saviour who died for him the Son that was before all worlds, perceives that there could have been no such Son, if there were not a Father of whose Person He is the express image, of whose glory He is the brightness. And he who has been glorifying his own spiritual nature, and has become aware of the impos-

sibility of realizing it,—of being truly a man among men,—unless the Holy Spirit dwells with him and unites him to his kind, confesses that only a Spirit who proceeds from the Holy Father and the Holy Son, can be the Comforter, Sanctifier, the guide to all truth, the bond of all love, whom he has wearily sought for and at last found.

And so, because they are not high-minded and have no longer proud looks, because their souls have been refrained and kept low, because they no longer exercise themselves in great matters which are too high for them, because they are as children weaned from their contradictory beliefs and partial idolatries, they can join in saying, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." They are sure that this is the One God blessed for ever, since He has made them to be of one heart and one mind. What was a contradiction when contemplated in the shifting lights of time, becomes a necessity when they see God and see themselves in the clear steadfast light of Eternity. And now they can take one step further. The Psalmist has been talking of himself and of the discipline which brought him low. But the last note of his song is, "O *Israel*, trust in the Lord, from this time forth for evermore!" Now that they have learnt this common Name, they can believe that they have a common Nation, that there is *now* (not that there *may* be hereafter) a common Church for all nations; yes, for heaven and earth! Is not

this the Name with which our Ethelberts and Edwins were sealed, when first they turned from idols and owned that a kingdom of Heaven was set up amongst them? Is it not the name with which the child of the Queen and of the mechanic is sealed at the font in our day? If we Englishmen trusted in this Name, would it not bind the hearts of the fathers to the children? should we not have a charm against sects and schisms which no persecutions, no compromises can give us, because we should satisfy the yearning of all sects, and take away the pretext for schism which our proud looks are continually ministering? If we trusted in this Name, might we not

> "Knit the bonds of peace and love
> Between all Christian lands,"

showing Romanists that we rest on the ground which the Creeds proclaim, showing Protestants that we have been brought to feel that ground which is at their feet and ours, not by the traditions of men, but by the demonstrations of God? If that is the calling of the English Church, O Lord! refrain our souls and keep them low, and wean us from our individual and national pride; make us anew in the image of Him Who could alone say, fully and perfectly, "I am not high-minded, I have no proud looks," that we may not hinder the work which with us or without us Thou wilt certainly accomplish—the reconciliation of Thy Church and Universe, the revelation of Thyself!

Second Sunday after Trinity.

June 21, 1857.

EPHESIANS IV. 3.

"ENDEAVOURING TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE."

SOME recent editors of the New Testament have followed some of the early Fathers in adopting a different punctuation of this passage from that which we find in our version. They would read, "I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, forbearing one another, in (or with) love endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit; in the bond of peace one body and one Spirit." There is an awkwardness in this construction which requires strong reasons to justify it. I know of none, except it be that the expressions "unity of the Spirit" and "bond of peace" are thought to be tautological, or that it is difficult to understand how the Unity of the Spirit can be *in* the bond of peace. Each of these objections may perhaps disappear when we consider the passage more attentively.

I. If the participle "endeavouring" had no more force than that which we are wont to give it in our day, it would be a very inadequate rendering of St. Paul's word. But there is nothing which is more significant of a change in the mind of a people, than that which gradually takes place in all phrases of this kind. *Endeavour* once denoted all possible tension, the highest energy that could be directed to an object. With us it means the last feeble, hopeless attempt of a person who knows that he cannot accomplish his aim, but makes a conscience of going through some formalities for the purpose of showing that the failure is not his fault. This sense it is especially likely to bear in the text, if we really feel that it is addressed to ourselves. "To keep unity in a world of division, how impossible! St. Paul cannot mean that we should actually do it. He only desires us to endeavour; and that we can do of course. We can avoid what will cause disturbance and quarrel: we can let others go their way while we take ours; so the burden of offence, if it comes, will rest upon them and not upon us."

My brethren, we must at once dismiss the thought from our mind that the Apostle intends this kind of abstinence from effort, this lazy neutrality, by "endeavour." He wishes us certainly to understand a very active, zealous, deliberate application of all the thought and feeling and power that is in us to a fixed end, which it is easy to miss, but which may be at-

tained, and which it is distinctly our own fault, our own sin, as well as our own misery, if we do not attain. If a man does not "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," he cannot lay the blame upon any one but himself; till he takes it home to himself he *has* not understood what it is which he is commanded to do, he *will* not understand how he may ever abstain from breaking the command.

II. For observe, we are bidden to *keep* the Unity of the Spirit. It is something then that we have, and are likely to lose; not something that we may possibly get, if fortune favours us. The endeavour is, to preserve that which has been entrusted to us and is with us. This is not merely the sense which a particular passage would suggest. It is the only sense which is in harmony with the uniform language of Scripture. Everywhere we are told of gifts bestowed, of treasures in earthen vessels; everywhere the exhortation is, "Hold fast that which is committed to thee; let no man take thy crown." All seeming deviations from this rule are easily explained by it, and ultimately resolve themselves into it. There may be promises of great blessings hereafter; it may be one of our highest duties to expect them, just as it is a great duty to look for a harvest in the appointed season, just as the husbandman's heart and arm would grow weak if he thought there would be no return for his labour. But the full corn in the ear is the same with the seed in the ground; after that has once been deposited

there, to watch and keep it is the only duty which he or the earth can perform. What shall come, depends on other influences; they may be checked or disappointed by neglect or by misdirected activity. They will offer no substitute for the seed, nor, in general, for the farmer's watchfulness.

III. But "endeavouring to keep *Unity*." Who can pretend that *this* has been given to us here in this world? Who can shut his eyes to the infinite disagreements and discords of the world? What honest man will affirm that discords have been terminated by Christianity; that it has not been the source of fresh, of deeper, of seemingly more interminable discords? It may have taught us to sigh for peace; but to say we have it, is surely to be guilty of the sin with which Isaiah charged the false prophets.

And yet, brethren, can we look into the world and not see that there is a Unity existing in it? I do not speak of Nature, all are ready to confess in some language or other that it is there—there in spite of innumerable jars and convulsions.

I do not speak of this, which often suggests, and naturally suggests, the most painful contrasts to the noise and turmoil that men have brought into every region with which they have anything to do; but precisely of *human* society,—of that which ever *is* distracted by all this noise and turmoil. You have a Unity in the midst of this strife, just as much as one amidst the earthquakes and volcanoes of the external

world. There are families, there are nations; I do not want to look for them in some distant golden age which never existed, or in some Atlantis you may dream of now. Take them in their worst condition: look at the family disturbed by all possible internal contentions, disturbed, if you will, by mischievous institutions, polygamy or any other. Still there is a Unity there, or you could know nothing of the contention, you would not feel it to be contention. There is a Family Unity; a Unity to be kept, not created; one which you destroy, if you seek to make it anew upon a scheme and platform of your own. It is so with every nation, however torn in pieces by old class hostilities or by new revolutions. The class hostilities threaten its destruction; but there is something to be destroyed: the new revolutions have scattered the warring elements; but in the heart of each there exists the witness of an Order and Unity which cannot be lost. Each one is trying to find a Unity in itself; each one is asking what it has to do with the other. The Unity has been lying in some deep well, it is much more wonderful and mysterious than we had supposed it to be; governments did not create it, fraud and force cannot preserve it. But it is to be kept. All the endeavour of all hearts would not have been wasted in keeping it; and yet a single heart may keep it, when the rest have been careless of it and have let it depart.

IV. The explanation of these contradictions lies in

the next words of the text: "Endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit."

There was once a strong conscience in nations and in Churches, that they had a Unity to keep, and that they ought to make strenuous endeavours to keep it. Strange acts proceeded from this conscience; acts that might tempt us to think it was no conscience at all, but an inspiration of the devil. Albigensian massacres, Smithfield fires, were some of its fruits. They were justified to those who authorized and kindled them by an internal assurance that nothing can be so precious to a nation, or to the Catholic Church, or to every human being, as Unity; that no sacrifices can be too costly or enormous to secure it. Nor is there any answer, I conceive, to the major proposition. I cannot say that *if* these massacres and fires, however horrible, *were* removing causes of strife and division, *were* establishing peace and Unity in a land or in the Universe, they were not a cheap price for a blessing so vast and immeasurable. But, thanks be to God! we are not driven, in a world governed by Him, to such terrible alternatives as these. We can pronounce fearlessly: Neither these measures nor any measures such as these ever did promote Unity,—ever did remove any obstacles to the possession of it. A thorough exterminating persecution, such as De Montfort or Alva conducted and approved, is in all respects far honester, far more reasonable, far more likely to be effectual, than a petty, affectedly moderate and ami-

able persecution, such as the nineteenth century might witness and bear. But one or the other must be equally unsuccessful for *this* purpose; must tend to defeat it. I do not mean that such experiments have never crushed opposition, have never had the effect of making men bow to certain decrees unresistingly, with a certain contentment. But just so far as they have done this, just so far have they been instrumental in destroying Unity—the Unity of which the text speaks, the Unity which the Catholic Church is pledged by its Creeds and its oaths to keep and defend. For if these Creeds and oaths mean anything, the Unity which we are to keep is a Unity of the Spirit; the Unity which was declared to exist on the day of Pentecost between men of all nations and languages. We do not believe in that sign if we do not believe that the true Unity is a Unity amidst diversity of customs, habits of mind, notions, education. We do not believe in that sign if we do not believe that the true Unity is a Unity in the Spirits of men, and not a Unity such as was sought to be established at Babel, of one tongue, under one tyrant. We do not believe in the Holy Ghost if we do not believe that He is the source of Unity, that He brings men to be of one mind in a house, a nation, a Church. We do not believe that the Holy Ghost has been given, if we do not think He is carrying on that work day by day and hour by hour in the societies of men and in the hearts of individuals; if we do not regard

all the events of God's general providence, all the particular circumstances of our own lives, all trials, all joys, yes! all the contradictions of human judgments, all the perversities of human will, as either agents by which He accomplishes His gracious purpose or enemies in the overthrow of which He manifests His mighty power.

Therefore we are bound to say, not that Innocent the Third,—or that any Protestant or any English ecclesiastic who, on a very limited scale and in a very awkward style, has imitated his gigantic experiments,—did too much for the sake of extirpating heresy, but that they did too little,—that a more root-and-branch system was then necessary, and is necessary now, for this essential object. If they wished to keep the Unity of the Spirit, they should have struck more resolutely and more deeply at the principles which are causing disunion. They should have sought for these principles first of all in themselves; they should have asked what it was that the Spirit of Truth and Unity was testifying against in their hearts and spirits. When they had carried their inquisition into these recesses, when they had, in the name of God and the Church, excommunicated and given over to the secular arm for slaughter all that they found secretly conspiring against peace and order there,—they would have found that they had not believed a lie when they proclaimed that Unity is the most precious of all things in the sight of God, and that

they might use His strength and His authority for the protection of it. And with this assurance there would have come such a sense of the beggarliness and baseness of the counterfeit Unity,—the Babel Unity,—which they, in defiance of God's Spirit, and in denial of His presence, had sought to create, as might have led them to an earnest, godly, fruitful repentance.

At all events, my brethren, this should be the effect upon us of what we read about them, of what we see in our age, of what we feel in ourselves. We ought not to rail at past times, but to imitate them in their vigorous endeavours to retain what it is death to lose; we should learn wisdom by their failures, understand where our vigilance is necessary from the misapplication of theirs. It is the greatest of all mistakes to suppose that there was a kind of necessity for Unity in the Early Ages or the Middle Ages, and that there is no such necessity now; that we have somehow learnt to dispense with it. We have learnt no such horrible lesson; we have arrived at no such horrible point of degeneracy and degradation. Never was the sense of the curse of division stronger than now; never was the crying for reconciliation stronger than now. Blundering attempts to force embraces, to smother differences; abject attempts to discover a human guide who will make us at one in spite of our reasons and wills, are proofs how vehement the passion is which will rather subject itself to ridicule

and court defeat than not find some vent for itself. What we want is a more thorough persuasion that nothing but a real Unity, a Unity of the Spirit, can satisfy us. Then the assertion that Christ, being ascended on high, has baptized and does baptize with the Holy Spirit,—which is the assertion of the New Testament, which is written in sunbeams in its pages,—will come to us, not as a hard dogma which must be accepted, but as the news of a well-spring of life within us; the answer to all we had been sighing for; the promise of deliverance from the dry notions of our intellects; from the dreary, disputatious, suspicious temper which so quickly becomes the predominating one in our hearts; from all in us that will not sympathize with others, because it is itself cold and dead. For we shall more and more discover that whatever is living in us does fly out to meet what is living in our fellow-men; that we have an interest in sustaining that, however at first it may seem to clash with our experience and modes of thinking; that to kill a thought, a conviction, a hope in any man, is to kill a germ of Unity,—is to kill something which the Spirit of God has planted, and which He would cause to grow and to bring forth. Some persons appear to think that it is their function and calling to find out whatever is *untenable* in the faith of their fellow-creatures, and to expose it or to make sport of it. No doubt such persons have their reward; if their work is one which God has set them, and they undertake

it from duty, and not malice, they may even derive a kind of pleasure from it, though I should imagine not a very keen or elevated pleasure. But it is surely not a less healthful or genial occupation to seek for what is *tenable*,—for what has a foundation in the faith of all people,—to the intent that ours may become clearer and more vital by intercourse and fellowship with theirs, and may give back as much as it receives; to the intent that each may communicate something which the other wants; to the intent that their faith may not dwell in them, nor ours in us, but both in the Truth, which both want.

V. And thus I am led to those words which some appear to have found unnecessary or inconvenient,—"*In the bond of Peace.*" Is not this a repetition? Is not the Unity of the Spirit the bond of peace? I think not. I think there could be no Unity of the Spirit if there were not a bond of peace; but that they are as completely distinct as the breath is from the air we breathe,—as the eye is from the light that shines into it. By the Unity of the Spirit I understand that which is produced in us by the Spirit of God,—the infinitely various efforts of desire, faith, hope, which He awakens and cultivates in different men, and which He makes them feel to be the movements and struggles of a common life. By the bond of peace I understand that whereto He shows them that all these movements are tending, that wherein He leads them to feel that they all may rest. As

there are some who would build the Church upon the grave of all active thoughts, energies, aspirations, —who make this most dreary solitude, and call it Christian Peace,—so there are those who think a Church can be built *upon* exertions and energies; that it requires no absolute Truth for its foundation, but only certain holy desires, good counsels, just works. I cannot believe that any man in whom such desires, such counsels, such works, are begotten, will feel satisfied with them. The yearning after Truth, after that which *is*, never can be long separated in any earnest mind from the affection for what is pure and right. There are instances of this division, instances of men who would have died for goodness, and yet scarcely perceived the worth of Truth. But they are scarcely possible in our time. The pursuit of natural science has had this blessed effect, that men demand something which is not hypothetical, which their own thoughts and conceptions do not supply, as a ground for their thoughts and conceptions to stand upon. The Spirit of God, I am sure, urges them to make this demand, in the spiritual world as much as in the natural. They must find something common there; or the spiritual consciousnesses, of which we hear so much, will simply turn in upon themselves and exhaust themselves in a perpetual search after—nothing.

Where then shall we find this bond of peace? I tried last Sunday to show you, by a series of instances, how men in our time, starting from the most oppo-

site points, engaged in the most dissimilar occupations, holding what seemed to be quite irreconcilable opinions, might find in that Name into which we are baptized, the reconciliation, the σύνδεσμος of their most inward and radical convictions, the deliverance from the intellectual dogmas which had kept them asunder. Evidence, then, furnished by our experience,—entirely irrespective of the traditions of our forefathers,—leads us back to their conviction, that we have here the living Truth which underlies and sustains both the natural and the spiritual world. If indeed those forefathers held that the Church stands upon Confession of that Name, either with the lip or in a written document, they used dangerous language, derogatory to the honour of Him Who is and was and is to come, and Who Himself bears up the pillars of the earth; Who is the only rock on which any house can be built, if the rains and winds are not to carry it away.

A united Confession of the Name, a united Worship of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit,—such a Confession,—such a Worship as the past contains only a dim shadow and prophecy of,—we have a right to look for. It may come when we least expect it; it will probably come after a period of darkness, fierce contention, utter unbelief. But the confession will only be united when we cease to confound our feeble expressions of trust and affiance, our praises and adorations, with Him to Whom they rise, from Whom they

proceed; when we are brought to nothingness, that He may be shown to be all in all.

Therefore, if we would keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, we must endeavour to maintain in our own hearts, and make others feel, this great distinction. We must show that we do not want them to adopt any tenets of ours; that we are aware of the impotence of physical force to do more than suppress the signs of disagreement—a result not only paltry, but for the most part mischievous,—and that we believe the moral force of arguments addressed to the understanding, or appeals addressed to the heart, is abused and desecrated when it is employed to make captives for our triumphs. For all powers of reasoning and of speech we are bound to hold as gifts of the Spirit of God, Who is working to deliver us from all our narrow and partial conclusions, and to bring us into the clear and full light of God's countenance. What we ask of Him is, that He will purge our ears, that we may hear the myriad voices which are speaking in His universe, because they all proceed from that Creative Word by Whom the Father made the world; but chiefly that He will enable us to have fellowship with the poorest child of man, seeing that he is compassed by the Father's Love, bears that nature which the Son took, and in which He died, and is not unworthy that the Holy Spirit should dwell with him, and embrace him and comfort him, and raise him to eternal life.

Therefore no one shall persuade us, for the sake of Unity, to part with this Name or explain it away, or substitute some other bond of union in the place of it. For the sake of our brethren and companions, for the sake of those who differ with us most, we dare not take this course. For by taking it we sever ourselves from both, we destroy the bond of peace in which we feel that God has made us and will prove us to be eternally at one with them. We want to be more, not less, zealous for this Name than the men of old were, because, if we have availed ourselves of all the teachings of God in these later centuries, we ought to know better than they did that it is a name of inclusion, not of exclusion; that there is eternal life in it, inasmuch as there is eternal love in it. We will not be unthankful that it has been handed to us in a form of words which peasants and children can repeat; for so we learn that it is revealed to us, not discovered by us; that it is not for one age, but for all ages; that we only apprehend it because it first apprehends us. We will teach it to the youngest, because we are sure that the youngest are compassed about by this mystery, as they are surrounded by the common air; and that their spirits are freest, the more they enter into it and draw life from it. We will teach it to the growing youth, not that we may hinder him from going forth and learning all that men have thought and written, to whom it was unknown, or who have disbelieved it; but precisely

that he may draw profit from all, that he may not be obliged to turn away from them in disgust and despair, by reason of their conflicts and contradictions. We will speak of it to the grown man, who is more busy with the controversies of life than with the controversies of the schools, because the more he has to encounter the strifes in others and himself, the more needful is it that he should keep in his own heart the Unity of the Spirit; the more needful is it that he should feel there is a bond of peace which has never been broken, and which will last for ever and ever.

Third Sunday after Trinity.

June 28, 1857.

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1 Peter v. 5.

"LIKEWISE, YE YOUNGER, SUBMIT YOURSELVES UNTO THE ELDER. YEA, ALL OF YOU BE SUBJECT ONE TO ANOTHER, AND BE CLOTHED WITH HUMILITY: FOR GOD RESISTETH THE PROUD, AND GIVETH GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."

There is a general complaint in our day—in some quarters one hears it very loudly indeed—that reverence has become, or is rapidly becoming, extinct. The words of Isaiah, it is said, are fulfilling themselves: "The child behaves himself proudly against the ancient, the base against the honourable." The sentiment of respect is gone; each one stands upon his own powers and his own right.

I suppose all of us, in a certain degree, recognize the truth of this charge against our own time. I suppose most have occasionally seen hopeful symptoms which have encouraged them to think that our condition may not be so bad as it is represented, or that there is a good counteracting the evil. I suppose that we have sometimes asked ourselves whether the feeling

of personal independence is not in itself a good which may make amends for many losses that accompany the acquisition of it.

But any consolation which we might derive from this last reflection, is checked by another. Can we claim this sentiment of personal independence as at all characteristic of ourselves? Is it not fading along with the one which appears to contend with it? Is there not less of self-reliance than there was? Are not men in all classes more lazily casting themselves upon some hope of relief to come from some accident or foreign help; striving less earnestly, less hopefully, to earn their bread by the sweat of their own brows? The sturdiness and manliness of the English peasant —so we are often told—are disappearing just as evidently as his feeling of deference for those who are above him.

I do not think that much good ever comes from balancing the arguments which show that the former days are better than ours against those which show that we are far greater, happier, more glorious than our forefathers. Every man of ordinary resources can call into the field an array on either side which for the moment will look overwhelming; a practised rhetorician will be able so to group facts and manage authorities, that no doubt of his conclusion will rest upon the mind of any one who wishes to adopt it.

I. But a sentence like this, if we felt it to be in-

deed a command, "All of you be subject one to another,"—would not that be something more than these speculations about the decline of reverence in an age or a country? That speaks to *me*. It tells me of a temper which ought to exist in society, which would preserve it; but of a temper which is first of all to be cultivated in myself—which cannot by possibility be diffused through a mass, except as it is formed in the heart of a man. What is the use of talking about the increase or diminution of the signs of respect in one class towards another? what is the use of arguing how far these signs actually mean as much as they seem to mean, or mean nothing? We may go at once to the thing signified: we may ascertain what we intend by our outward acts and tokens of respect; what they answer to in ourselves; what they do not answer to. We may look at once to the root of the matter, and see whether our respect is merely the effect of the circumstances and accidents in which we live; whether it depends on some external conventional witness of propriety and decorum; whether it has been merely taught us by the precept of men; or whether it proceeds from an under source, and is kept alive by springs within, which the Spirit of God Himself is renewing continually.

These are the really important inquiries; upon them all others depend. If we suppose that a reverence grounded on mere social arrangements, upon that which has been settled and decreed and has become

a part of the traditions and customs of an age or a country, will stand any shocks, we shall certainly be deceived. These social arrangements, these customs and traditions, are not ancient enough for a feeling so deep and venerable as this to sustain itself upon; they hang upon it far more than it hangs upon them; they speak to it and call it forth only because they bear witness of something deeper beneath, from which if they are separated, all their charm vanishes. And let us not suppose that when these props fail, the Bible or Christianity can be called in to aid their weakness. The Bible and Christianity are continually forcing this thought upon us, that nothing can stand which has not a foundation; that if we wish any social edifice to bear the winds and rain, we must dig deep and build it upon a rock; that the passion of the heart for external things and forms, though it looks strong, is not a safe one—not one upon which we can depend. For the idol of yesterday may not be the idol of to-day; if then the thing or the form derives its substance from the mind of the worshiper, it must be subject to all the vicissitudes and fluctuations of that mind, which always claims a right to depose that which it has established. To this point then the Apostle brings us. He recognizes the relation of younger to elder as a very deep relation, involving duties, calling for subjection. With this natural relation he connects others equally real, though not equally acknowledged. But he has no hope that his

admonitions will be heeded, that they will be more than any other maxims of behaviour, which are listened to, and approved, and disobeyed, unless the principle which lies beneath them is apprehended. "All of you be subject one to another." This reverence is not one grounded ultimately upon differences of position or differences of age. Unless each man cherishes it toward every other man; unless he feels that there is a grandeur and awfulness in the fellow-creature who is not distinguished from him by any external signs of superiority at all, who has all the external signs of inferiority,—unless he feels that there is (the word is a strong one, but it is St. Peter's, and we cannot change it) a subjection due to every such man, that a positive deference is to be paid him,—he will not keep alive the other kind of respect, it will assuredly perish.

The old oriental notion that royalty is mysterious, and that when it casts away mystery it ceases to obtain respect, is unquestionably grounded on a great truth. It becomes converted into a great falsehood when the mystery is degraded into a trade mystery; when vulgar arts are used to keep up the impression of something sacred and divine,—those who practise them all the while not believing that there is anything behind the mask which they have themselves shaped out and painted. St. Peter does not deny the mystery which these traders counterfeit, but leads us to another which is yet more profound and awful,

and before which we should learn to tremble. He finds this mystery in the being of man himself; every one he meets is the shrine of it; every beggar carries in him that which an archangel cannot look into, which can be described in no words, measured by no human standards. Try to think of him in that character; try to believe that he is not one with the rags that cover him, but is one of that race for which the Son of God died; that he bears the nature which He took in the virgin's womb, which He offered up on the Cross, in which He dwells on the right-hand of the Majesty on high. Try to think of that man as having a whole world within him, unknown to you, unknown to him, which is yet a more wonderful world than this which his eyes and yours look upon; nearer to the centre from which this external one receives its light and heat.

Try to think so! But will the trial succeed? Is there any chance of forcing ourselves into so strange a state of feeling? Is not this sympathy with people utterly different from ourselves a special gift to a few individuals, commonly women rather than men? And is it not more properly called pity than reverence?

II. St. Peter meets these questions in the second part of the text: "Be clothed with humility." St. Peter knew—no one better—that it is not in station nor in mere example to make a man humble. He was a fisherman, yet he was proud. He conversed

with our Lord for three years; still he was proud. He was low, but he aspired to be high. He might be spurned by the people of Judæa as a Galilean, or by the Romans as a Jew; but perhaps he should set his foot upon the necks of both; he should have some goodly place in his Master's kingdom, if not the highest place of all. An ambition which seemed very lofty, and yet which was, in truth, not lofty enough. He was to attain more than he dreamed of; he was to have a greater apprehension of the glory which belonged to him even than he had yet realized. And that he might attain this, he was first of all to know what he was in himself. The self-confidence was brought to the test and fell; he would go to prison and death, but he had not courage to speak the truth before a servant. What darkness closed in upon him then and shut out all, the past and the future! What light was really coming to him through that darkness,—a light that illuminated past, present, and future! In himself he was the weakest of all creatures: he could not impute any weakness, any heartlessness to another, which he had not been made conscious of in himself. But had he no strength? was it altogether a dream that he could go to prison and death? There was One in that house standing before Caiaphas, shortly to be brought to the Roman Governor, thence to be taken to Calvary. Why was it that he had felt that strength in his person which had now deserted him? A question full of doubt, full of

wonder, not to be solved then, though Christ Himself had said within a few hours, "I am the vine, ye are the branches. Abide in me, and my word shall abide in you." A question which the Resurrection itself and all the words that were spoken after it, and the Ascension, only begin to clear up. A question which that Comforter Who was to be sent from the Father, and to testify of Christ, alone could clearly unfold. Under his teaching the Apostle learnt that to set up himself must be his folly, his misery, his degradation; that to trust in Christ was to abide in his true state; to claim fellowship with the real Lord of his life, the source of all his powers, energies, hopes, to become the sharer of a mysterious kingdom, to become the trustee of mighty powers, to enter into the reality of his dreams, to leave all and yet to possess all things. But to trust in Christ was to trust in Him Who had said, "Come unto me, for I am meek and lowly of heart." To trust in Him was to be clothed with humility. Peter had none of it himself; if he fancied it, he became proud again—more proud than ever. But he knew that pride was always near him, that it was his besetting sin; that he could only be freed from it by turning to Him who was as much the friend and life-giver to the most insignificant lamb of the flock as to him, one of the chief shepherds of it.

Such phrases as these then, which occur so often in the New Testament, "Put on Christ," "Having the mind of Christ," "Be clothed with humility,"

which are often cast aside as mere figures of speech, oriental modes of thought, were the most accurate, the most exactly corresponding to his inward experience, which the Apostle could use. I believe they are the most accurate we can use, and that the more we know of ourselves, the more we shall find in them the profoundest reality, that which meets our necessities as none other can.

III. It introduces and explains the third clause of the text, "For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." "How shall I be rid of this pride, it is so natural, so ingrained?" This must have been St. Peter's question very often; it must be ours. At last he found the answer. It was a terrible one. It was an everlasting one. When he was proud he was not sinning against a rule, a precept; he was resisting God,—that God Who had been pleased to make man His habitation and temple, to dwell in the midst of His creatures, to enclose them with His own power, to guide and actuate them by His own inspiration. Every act of pride was nothing more than doing battle against Him; refusing to be ruled and moved by Him. And all humility meant nothing else but yielding to His government,—but permitting the Spirit of Christ to hold that spirit which He had redeemed, and claimed for His own. It was a bold thing to talk of clothing himself with the Righteousness of Christ, of putting on His qualities. Very bold; but if this is our proper humanity,—if no other is intended for us,—if

all that we have substituted for it has been assumed in spite of God's Will,—He Himself will clothe us with our right mind, He Himself is clothing us day by day. For what is all the discipline of life but this? What is it, but urging us not to set ourselves above the Son of God, to be content to stoop as the Lord of Earth and Heaven stooped? And when a man is once bowed to the conviction that he is not meant to be what his Master and King refused to be, that it is not condescension in him to be on a level with those to whom the Prince of the kings of the earth levelled Himself, "God giveth grace." All the powers of the universe are then conspiring with him, not pledged to crush his wild Titanic ambition. The loving might of the Creator is not any longer a weight upon the poor atom that is sustained and kept in existence by it; that poor atom may be sure that this might, this love, will be with him in the height and in the depth, in life and death; will quicken it with immortal energies, will make it serve His gracious purposes more and more through the ages to come.

IV. St. Peter then could transfer his own hardly-won experience to the Church, and could say in his Catholic Epistle to the dispersed of that time, to the dispersed through all time, "All of you be subject one to another." So he asserted the true condition of a society while he took down the conceit of its separate members; so he exalted each of these members in the very act of depressing him. One dwells

among you Whom Principalities and Powers confess to be the Lord. God wills that you should be all like Him; that you should all share His glory. And this was His glory,—to be the servant of all, to bear the sins of all, to die the death of all. Be sure that in every one of these miserable creatures of flesh and blood He is dwelling; that they will be manifested hereafter as His brethren. Be subject to Him then in them. In every one there is something sacred, something from which thou hast to learn, something which thou hast to obey. Take an extreme case, for laws like these admit of no exceptions. A fool or a reprobate, a man whom it is a duty to restrain and to punish, may speak words which will touch thee to the quick. The lips may be polluted, but the underground from which they issue is divine, oracular. Fear to reject the sentence, lest thou shouldst be rejecting one that comes out of the mouth of God. And reverence the shrine too. The man may be regarding himself as a beast, may be making himself one. But do not thou indorse his blasphemy. Reverence him, that he may learn to reverence himself. Reverence him too much to indulge any of his follies or his sins. Deal with them severely; use the sharpest discipline which the case calls for. But remember that these are his enemies, his destroyers, not himself.

V. Generally this rule of being subject one to another, when applied to a society, implies that we should respect the opinions, habits, individual peculiarities, hereditary prepossessions of every man with whom

we have to do; that we should take it for granted he has something which we need; that we should fear to rob him of anything which God has given him. This respect for him does not come from our caring more for him than for Truth. It is part of our homage to Truth. There is a danger of making him less true, of alienating him from Truth, through our desire to attach him to ourselves. And therefore that same subjection one to another must make us resolute to maintain all truth so far as we have grasped it; courageous to assert it; vehement in denouncing all the habits of mind which, we know from ourselves, are unfavourable to the pursuit of truth, and undermine the love of it.

And so this submission to man, which is in very deed submission to God, will preserve us from all servility; from that kind of deference to the judgment of individuals or of multitudes which is incompatible with genuine manliness, because it is incompatible with genuine reverence.

I believe, brethren, nothing is so fatal to the respect of the younger for the elder, to the respect for what is beautiful and gracious, to all noble and chivalric duty and obedience, as that bastard homage for what is not venerable but very vulgar and contemptible, which creeps so readily over us, and which has been an especial disgrace and curse of our day. The worship of those who by fair means or foul have scraped a certain quantity of money together,—the worship of the thing called public opinion,—is possible only because the reverence for man as man is so weak and

low amongst us. When we really cultivate that, all other kinds of deference to age, to rank, to office, will be possible and will be honourable. Without it they become degrading affectations; they take their colour from the baseness of our ordinary habits.

How ignominious is it then in Churchmen to be crying out that they and their offices do not meet with the respect which was paid them in the old time; that the rich scorn us privately; the poor openly; that religion is despised in the persons of its representatives! How dare we make such complaints ourselves, or suffer others to make them for us? What is it but saying that the Church is not constituted upon the principle on which our Lord declared that it is constituted—upon which He proved that it is constituted—that the chief of all is the servant of all. For if that be the law of its existence, we must be much more to blame for any want of reverence that exists around us than any other men can be. We must have failed in that reverence for all men, that subjection to all men, which it is our calling to exhibit. We must have failed to show the rich how beggarly that is which distinguishes them from the poor, how glorious that is which they share together. We must have fallen ourselves into that subjection which is not human, but slavish; not humble, but self-seeking; not of Christ, but of Antichrist. Before we say a word against our English people for despising us, let us see to it that we have not earned their contempt by qualities which are offensive to all true English freedom and manliness;

before we say that they have lost their Christianity, let us earnestly consider whether we have not parted with ours.

We boast that our Church does not stand upon a human foundation; that we do not make that Apostle whose words we have been considering this afternoon, whose festival we shall be keeping tomorrow, into the Rock of our trust. It is a worthy cause of congratulation, if we are holding the less on Him whom St. Peter confessed to be the Son of the living God, if the Stone elect and precious of which he wrote, of which he lived to testify, is the one which is binding us as a holy Temple together. But we are not confessing Jesus to be the Son of God, we are not regarding Him as the corner-stone of our building, if we are not learning the lesson which St. Peter has been teaching us today; if we seek to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi, if we do not seek to show who is our Master by being subject one to another as He was. For by subjection He proved Himself on earth to be the Son Who dwelt with the Father before all worlds; His subjection to the Cross was His exaltation above every name that is named. Filial subjection He showed to be essential to that perfect union of substance and of will which He has with the Father in the Blessed Spirit; and we are told that as it was in the beginning so it shall be in the end. For it is written that when all things are put at the feet of the Son, the Son Himself shall be subject to Him Who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

July 5, 1857.

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1 Timothy i. 15.

"THIS IS A FAITHFUL SAYING, AND WORTHY OF ALL ACCEPTATION, THAT CHRIST JESUS CAME INTO THE WORLD TO SAVE SINNERS; OF WHOM I AM CHIEF."

If a person who was acquainted with the outline of St. Paul's history should hear these words for the first time, and should be told that they were the Apostle's, he would be likely to form a very erroneous conjecture respecting the occasion which called them forth. He would probably conclude that a sentence containing such an elementary truth as this must have occurred in some discourse to heathens who had never before heard the Gospel. The concluding clause would seem to him to fix the date of that discourse very shortly after St. Paul's own conversion. It would be most natural for one from whose eyes the scales had just fallen, who was overpowered with wonder at the mercy of Christ, who recollected the few days which had elapsed since he was seeking to bind all who called upon that name, to exclaim, "Of all sinners whom He

came to save, I am the chief." Would not such a person be startled if he were told that this primary truth was delivered with so much solemnity and emphasis in a letter to one who from a child had known the Scriptures, who had been for years under St. Paul's own guidance, whom he had thought ripe enough in faith and wisdom to rule over a Church which must have required more various gifts for its government than almost any other? Would not the surprise be still greater, when he learnt that it was Paul the aged; Paul who had been in imprisonments, scourgings, deaths oft, for the sake of the Gospel; upon whom came every day the care of all Churches, who thought his sin surpassed that of the disobedient and ungodly of whom he had just been speaking, and for whom he said the Law was framed?

I. I would speak to you, brethren, on this last point first. How are we to understand this language of the Apostle respecting himself? How can he have had a right to say he was the chief of sinners? If he had that right, how can any other person claim the same? How can the words be used by a minister or a layman in the present day without some consciousness of insincerity?

You will, I hope, at once dismiss from your minds any thought that the Apostle was exhibiting to his son Timothy what some would call a graceful humility. We ought to assure ourselves that no humility can be graceful, because none can be gracious, which has not

its foundation in truth. Of all qualities, this is the one which it is most monstrous to counterfeit. Airs of lowliness, the assumption of insignificance and baseness, denote a man who has never known what he himself is, and who is trying to obtain the credit of being something better than he is. Of all persons in the world, St. Paul was the freest from this wretched affectation. He does not scruple to proclaim his powers as an Apostle; he does not fear, when the occasion demanded it, even to boast of what God had called him to do and to suffer. He would speak of himself as he would of another man, honestly and simply. If it was the fact that he had laboured more abundantly than all the Apostles, he did not shrink from announcing it.

Neither must we say that St. Paul was led to give himself this title because he had a sudden and keen remembrance of his life when he was a persecutor of the faith. He certainly had that remembrance. The context of this passage shows that he had it while he was writing to Timothy.

But he could not think himself—we know from the words which he uses when describing his previous history that he did not think himself—worse than other persecutors merely because he was more zealous than they were. His zeal was a heavenly and divine quality, not an earthly or a devilish one. The energy which drove him to seek letters from the High Priest, that he might go to Damascus rather than abide at Jeru-

salem, was the energy which afterwards carried him to Macedonia at the bidding of the Angel, made him preach the word in season and out of season, enabled him to resist the entreaties of his friends and the prophets, because he was willing not to be bound only, but to die for the name of the Lord Jesus. He was certainly not the chief of sinners because he acted out a wrong conviction more vigorously than others did.

Nor must we forget that the words, literally taken, do not warrant us in supposing that St. Paul referred wholly or chiefly to the past. If he says, "I am first, or chief," Timothy must have understood that he was not charging himself with the crimes of other days, but was expressing what was in his mind at the time he wrote. Whatever he learnt on the day when it was first revealed to him that he was persecuting his Lord and Deliverer, had been strengthening and deepening and expanding within him ever since. That which was true once, he believed to be true then. His apprehension of the truth was not less but more vivid than it had been at the first moment.

It has been suggested that the word πρῶτος may not mean exactly what we mean by "chief;" that it may rather denote St. Paul to be a specimen of the mercy shown to sinners, than indicate any comparison between him and others. I am willing and desirous to substitute the adjective "first" for "chief." But the change will not produce all the effect which

those who have proposed it anticipate from it. St. Paul must still speak of himself as representing the whole class of sinners, not merely as representing those who have experienced God's forgiveness. The alteration is good for this reason. The word "chief" has led some to suppose that he is measuring his crimes, or transgressions of the law, against those of his fellow-men. Nothing could be further from his intention. He affirms in his letter to the Philippians that he "was, as touching the righteousness that is in the Law, blameless." He describes in the context of this passage the persons to whom the punishments of the Law were applicable, and against whom they were to be denounced. He speaks of "murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers;" and of all other the most flagrant offenders against the peace and order of society. The Law proved its justice by affixing to each palpable outrage and overt act its meet recompense of reward. St. Paul had been a zealot in enforcing the Law; he had never brought himself within the range of one, even the mildest, of its formal censures.

"But by the Law," he says elsewhere, "comes the knowledge of Sin." It prohibits offences; it awakens a man to perceive that there is in him a disposition to commit these offences. It makes him conscious that he has a will which is struggling with the will of the Lawgiver, even while he submits, humbly or sullenly, to His decrees. This is the discovery of another fact altogether. Legal measures are altogether out of place

here. How can a code prescribe a punishment for alienation of heart? How can the code which is most accurately and divinely adapted to the correction of misdoings, reach the doer? How can it make him another man?

Here then St. Paul found himself "first." Yes, in a most awful sense, alone. He had no means of ascertaining how far other men had separated themselves from the righteous, loving mind of God. The Law said, "Thou hast done it." And by degrees he found that the Law was only echoing without, what a Living Voice was saying to him within. The Spirit of God convinced him of sin. The Spirit of God showed him that he had separated himself from the true Lord of his Spirit, from Him in Whom righteousness and life dwell. The Spirit of God spoke not to him as one of a crowd of offenders, but to him directly; to him "first." He only knew other men's sins through his own. He could only estimate their deflections from the true standard by his. And since the more he knew of the attraction of the divine magnet, the more he knew the strength of the inclination there was in him to wander from it, the more he attributed any right direction of his spirit to *its* influence—he could say, with no affectation, with the inmost sincerity, "Of sinners I am first. More of this love has been shown to me than to any I know; my resistance therefore has been greater than that of others. If the light has overpowered me, there has been a struggle with it, there *is* a struggle with it,

which I dare not say is equally mighty and desperate in them."

If this was the warrant for this mode of speech, you will not wonder that he should have used it with even more emphasis in the later days of his earthly pilgrimage, than in the earlier. It was not that his conscience became more scrupulous as he grew in years, and therefore that he attached sinfulness to acts which he once regarded as indifferent. Precisely the opposite assertion is true. He could eat or abstain, be a Jew or Gentile, as served his Master's cause best; his conscience every day acquired more freedom. It was that as he became more possessed with the Spirit of God, he became more aware how near the Spirit of Evil dwelt to him; it was that falsehood, malignity, selfishness, the essential qualities of the Evil Spirit, looked to him more dreadful and detestable than all the outward forms of wickedness which they generate. It was that he felt he was in closer contact with those principalities and powers in high places than his converts, or than those who were unconverted. It was that but for a supporting arm, a continually present grace, he felt he should fall into a depth of evil and death which none of them had sounded.

You will think, perhaps, that St. Paul's large and intimate acquaintance with the moral abuses and corruptions that sprang up in the members of the different Churches which he had planted, may have diverted his mind from this contemplation, and may have proved

that there was a wickedness about him which had never penetrated within him. Assuredly his continual occupations will have had the blessed effect of withdrawing him from any morbid self-contemplation, and will have confirmed the witness of his own spirit and of God's Spirit, that a man is not to pore over his own feelings in order to find materials either for accusation or encouragement. But you must not fancy that he thought more gently of himself as he became acquainted with the party-spirit and sensuality of the Corinthians, or when he found the Galatians regarding him whom they had once loved with such a violent affection, as their enemy, because he told them the truth. I rather suppose that he detected in himself all the evils which caused him such bitter pain in them, that he understood their heresies and carnality and suspicions by the seeds of the like which he found in his own heart; that he never condemned them without passing sentence upon tendencies which might at any moment start to life in him. I apprehend that in this way the more he did this,—the more he understood his relation to his flock as their minister and priest,—the more he perceived that he was the first among sinners.

By such processes, brethren, he was, I conceive, trained to a real, not a mock humility. He actually sank lower in his own estimation than we ever sink in ours, because he had a clearer insight into the glory of his position than we have; he had a profounder and more personal knowledge of sin, because he had also

a more elevated and comprehensive belief in the salvation from it. This is the second point to which I wish to call your attention.

II. The words "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," sound to us like a commonplace which we heard in the nursery. They were certainly not less familiar to Timothy or to St. Paul. Why did they never lose their freshness for the aged Apostle? Had he discovered some more refined sense for them than that in which they were received by children and women? No, I apprehend it was exactly their application to the vulgarest people of the earth which gave them their force and vitality for him. I apprehend it is exactly because we have gone in search of refined meanings for them,—because we have substituted what we call a theory or scheme of salvation for the belief which the words, simply taken, express,—that they have lost their force and vitality for us. He who had been led to think of himself as a sinner, to understand sin by what he found in himself,—he who, when he thought of sinners, thought first of himself,—could not enter into large speculations about the amount of guilt which the world had incurred by its transgression of God's commandments, about the amount of punishment which that guilt had necessarily contracted, about the amount of satisfaction which is demanded that that guilt and punishment may be removed from it. The question which he had to debate was of far too terrible a kind to be met by

any such reasonings and adjustments. There was some strange hostility between his mind and the mind of a Righteous Being, his Creator. Could they be reconciled? There was some bondage upon his will. Could it be set free? *This* experience, *this* demand, is met by the broad announcement: "One is come from that Righteous Being with whom thou art at war, expressly to make peace. One is come to save sinners out of their sins." He might doubt long and ask earnestly whether news so good could be true. He must have a real emancipation, real peace with God. The claim of every one calling himself a Deliverer and Reconciler must endure the severest of all tests. Was he able to do that which none else had been able to do? Could he accomplish what the Law and sacrifices, that he held to be most divine, had not accomplished? Could he succeed where they had failed? Could he set at rest the controversies which they had aroused? Those points must be settled to the satisfaction of one who was engaged in a battle for life and death. No one could settle them for him. An archangel could not force him to accept the Gospel merely on his authority. The poorest man might bring it with such evidence to his conscience that he could not but say, "It is true." And when *he* had said this, the repetition of the truth to which he had given his adhesion could never become a flat or a stale one. For there were ever within him the threatenings of fresh tumults, of a new rebellion. Oftentimes the insurgents were actually in

arms. Oftentimes he had to ask himself, "Am I leagued with them?" And the tyrants who had held him bound were not dead, not even sleeping; his limbs sometimes seemed to miss the support of the chains that had been so heavy upon them.

Was this all? Was there no brighter light coming to him every moment from that Heaven into which he believed the Son of God had ascended? no clearer and deeper insight into the effects of His coming to our world than had been vouchsafed here at first? Surely there was. It is contained in the plural, *sinners*. His experience had been personal. He had known sin in *himself*. He had known deliverance in himself. But that sin consisted in separation from his fellows as well as from God. That deliverance consisted in reunion to his fellows as well as to God. Jesus Christ had saved him; but He had not come into the world to save him. There was not a man who had not the same needs as he had; there was not a man who had not the same Helper as he had. It was impossible to separate himself from his kind. *Faithful is the saying, and worthy of universal acceptation;* worthy, as our Communion Service renders the sentence, deviating a little from the letter of the words to assert their meaning,—"worthy of all men to be received," that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners from that which would not let them be members of a human family, to bind them into such a family in Himself.

So the plain words are the most comprehensive as well as the most personal. We have not exhausted them yet. We are only beginning to have a little glimpse of their signification. That glimpse is lost almost entirely when we try to learn what is sin by observing others and judging others; when we fancy that what we need is an escape from God's judgments, not an escape from ourselves and a reconciliation to Him. But if we become children in malice and men in understanding, if, not as a paltry pretence when we are making a display before cowards, but in a letter to a dear friend, in our secret colloquies with ourselves, we confess ourselves to be first in the rank of sinners because we confess ourselves to have received all help to be righteous,—then these glimpses will grow brighter and brighter till the perfect day. Then the Communion will indeed be the interpreter of the words with which we prepare our communicants. Then we shall be sure that He Who came into the world to save sinners is sustaining them with His own pure and perfect sacrifice, and is inviting them to fellowship with His Father and their Father. Then we shall not doubt that the rapturous anticipations of St. Paul, which we have read in the Epistle for today, shall be fulfilled; and that not we only, but the whole involuntary creation which has suffered from the consequences of man's sins, shall share in the glory of the Deliverer, when He appears without sin unto salvation.

Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

July 12, 1857.

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1 Corinthians ii. 31, 32.

"FOR IF WE WOULD JUDGE OURSELVES, WE SHOULD NOT BE JUDGED. BUT WHEN WE ARE JUDGED, WE ARE CHASTENED OF THE LORD, THAT WE SHOULD NOT BE CONDEMNED WITH THE WORLD."

It is, I fear, a very common feeling, among laymen as well as clergymen, that ordinary words, when they are applied to theological subjects, lose their original signification, and become parts of a merely technical nomenclature. The words 'judge' and 'judgment' have a meaning in common cases which men at once recognize, if they are not able strictly to define it. They have no doubt that a *judgment* is an act of discrimination; an attempt to separate the tenable from the untenable, the right from the wrong. When they speak of judgment as a *faculty*, their language, be it ever so loose, shows you that they wish to describe a power which ascertains boundaries, which draws the line between acts or thoughts or words that without it would be confounded. But when we refer to any events or series of events as *Divine* judgments, it seems that

we are not carrying this sense into a higher, clearer region, but that we are almost entirely losing it. By a judgment, in *that* application, we appear to intend little more than a *disaster* which, because we do not know to what other origin we should attribute it, we refer to the Father of all. A fortune, a child, a deliverance from expected ruin or death, we call a *mercy;* a famine, a pestilence, an earthquake, we call a *judgment.* We cannot account for the former class of events, except by supposing that the Ruler of the World has a gracious design towards us; we cannot account for the latter, except by supposing that we have in some way grieved Him. In each case we feel as if there was some departure from the ordinary rule of His government, some *interference* for us or against us. And we ask ourselves, Why has it happened? What act of ours can we fix upon which we may most naturally connect with it?

St. Paul's words in the text, which contains the expressed essence of a great many passages of Scripture, furnish us with a means of testing this mode of speaking and thinking.

"*If we would judge ourselves,*" he says, "*we should not be judged of the Lord.*" Evidently we could not paraphrase the word 'judge' in the first clause, by 'bring a calamity on ourselves;' therefore it must not be so paraphrased in the second. We must be commanded to judge ourselves in the ordinary sense of distinguishing between what is right and wrong, pre-

cious and vile in ourselves; this therefore must be the main characteristical design, according to the inspired Apostle, of the judgment which God exercises over us. In the next verse he affirms that it is so. But without at present speaking of that verse, there is enough in the one I have quoted to remove a great many erroneous impressions, and to suggest many deep truths.

I. St. Paul certainly assumes that there is in us a capacity of judging ourselves. We *can* overlook our own acts and feelings; we *can* pronounce sentence upon them. Every man's conscience, and the language of mankind, confirm this belief. We know that we are abandoning a prerogative which we have no right to abandon, which we cannot safely abandon, when we are *not* taking cognizance of that which we do to others, of that which is passing within us. It would be no mercy, but a great degradation, if we were excused from this jurisdiction.

II. St. Paul says next, that the Lord will not excuse them from it. He takes the office which they have abdicated. He manifests Himself as a Judge when they will not judge. Remember to whom these words were spoken. The Corinthian Christians were not men of dark, reprobate characters. St. Paul says of them that "they came behind in no gift." It is clear from his letter that they did not. And yet that letter is full of complaints and objurgations. Why? Because good and evil lay side by side in their minds, confounded, not contrasted. Zeal and party spirit; a

sense of the value of spiritual gifts, and vanity in the use and appreciation of them; impatience of imperfect teaching, tolerance of practical corruptions; high spiritualism, mixing itself with gross sensuality,—these were their characteristics. They imply no absence of what is best, no absence of love for what is best. But they imply that best and worst passed easily and rapidly into each other; there were no landmarks. It was these men who did not judge themselves, and therefore were to be judged by the Lord.

III. Perhaps you will say, that by judging themselves the Apostle means exercising discipline in the Church, casting out unworthy members of it. No doubt that the Corinthians failed in this duty; he who had committed sins of which a heathen would have been ashamed, was nevertheless tolerated in their communion. And yet the Apostle never objects it to them that they were reluctant to judge each other; he especially beseeches them not to be so active in that work. "Judge," he says, "nothing before the time when the Lord shall come, Who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and manifest the counsels of the heart." Judging others was in fact their besetting sin. They were ever determining that this man was not so wise or so spiritual as themselves; one was slandered as a narrow Judaical follower of Cephas; another, as a mystical disciple of Apollos; a third, as seeking a dangerous freedom with Paul. And on this very account they could not judge themselves; the

faculty of judgment lost its edge; it exhausted itself in unprofitable, unlawful efforts. It was ever busy looking outward for motes; the consciousness of the beam within became continually less alive.

IV. And this was the very reason why their neglect of outward discipline was so gross and shameful. They had no sense of the sacredness and dignity of that Communion which bound them all together as members of one body; its profanation was easily borne. The party symbol, the party sympathy, was everything; their calling as baptized men, the common rights into which it introduced them, were nothing. Such want of discrimination respecting themselves, therefore, did not the least imply too magnificent an idea of their privileges as Christians, too eager a claim to possess them. It is St. Paul who urges them to believe that all things are theirs, whether life, or death, or things present, or things to come, or Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, because they are Christ's, and Christ is God's. They are blamed, not for their presumption in believing this, but for that confused habit of mind which made them ignorant at once of their high position and their great perils,—of the light into which they had been brought, and the darkness which was threatening to extinguish it.

V. All these considerations show us that the Divine judgment which St. Paul spoke of, could not be neccssarily one which distinguishes between this person and that; choosing out the godless man for its

object, passing over him who was acting consistently with his profession. The argument of the Epicurean poet against Providence, that the lightning strikes the temple and its devout worshiper as much as the boldest defier, might not be refuted in this case more than in any other; it might receive new confirmation. The human judgment had not made, and could not make, *this* separation; it had no commission for such a work; it had erred in not discovering the thoughts and intents of the heart over which it was set to preside, in not keeping that heart with all diligence. The judgment which was needed because this task had been forgotten, would do what it had failed to do; would take men apart to question them about themselves; would reveal to them their own hidden counsels; would awaken them to consider what God had created and redeemed them to be, what they might be if they were really walking in His way, what they would become if they lived in themselves and to themselves, as if they were separate from Him.

VI. Now, brethren, I think that we have some principles here, which apply to ourselves. I am far from thinking, as I said very recently, that it is desirable or right to find fault with our own age, and to speak of its manifold inferiority to the ages gone by. But if there are any qualities which all agree to be characteristic of us, any upon which we are inclined to value ourselves, it cannot be amiss to inquire what dangers have followed and do follow from the

possession of them. Most of us are agreed that we live in a critical rather than in a creative period. Whatever other faculties we have or have not, the critical faculty developes itself in us in our very boyhood. Whatever other faculties we cultivate or do not cultivate, we give all possible scope and exercise to this. Criticism, in one shape or another, is the occupation of nearly all who aspire to write or to speak. Politicians, artists, religious men, all alike are critics; some censors of their predecessors as well as of their contemporaries. I do not complain that we are born into a time which has this strong bias. I am sure it is not to be violently counteracted. I am sure there must be a meaning in it, and that we should try earnestly to know what that meaning is. But it is impossible to deny that the effect which followed a similar predominance of this temper in the later ages of Greece—the effect which St. Paul discovered in the Corinthian Church—is just as conspicuous among us. Judging others, we have lost to a very great degree the power of judging ourselves.

I am willing to adopt the Apostle's language in our case. I am ready to admit that Englishmen of the nineteenth century "come behind in no gift;" that they have at least as many fine and noble impulses as men had in any other day; that we have shaken off some follies to which our forefathers yielded; that we are awake to some sins which they blindly committed; that our social standard is often

higher; that we confess many obligations and responsibilities which, a century ago, were not thought of; that we can pronounce sentence upon evils from which we have not yet been delivered.

But this we all do feel at times; this, if we are honest, we shall confess. We may not want any good; but we are grievously wanting in energy and manliness, to choose the good and reject the evil. We allow right and wrong impulses to act upon us together, as if they all came from the same source, and might, one as much as the other, be obeyed. We dwell in a twilight of half-realized truths, half-followed convictions; we catch frequent glimpses of a celestial light, which we do not trace to its source, and therefore which we boast of as our own, and which soon becomes darkened by shadows cast from the mind that it should have illuminated.

This, brethren, this is the charge which no special pleading in favour of the age can evade; which accounts for the discontent and weariness that earnest men exhibit in it, in spite of the excellence which they cannot deny to be in it; which makes good their complaints of its practical feebleness, even when you feel as if it had a strength somewhere which might move mountains. If this time were so paltry, so heartless as it is sometimes represented to be, the contemplation of it might be more disgusting, but it would be far less saddening. It is difficult to weep over the fall of a mere voluptuary; but that strength and

bravery and gentleness, all beautiful and graceful endowments, the eye to see and the will to command, should be wasting themselves in fruitless efforts, useless exhibitions, vain imaginations, and sinking down at last, after achieving nothing for the world, only a pain and oppression to their possessor; this is a mournful spectacle indeed. And yet who has not witnessed such? who, I might say, is not witnessing them continually? And what, you ask yourself, was wanting? Where did these spirits finely touched and to the finest issues, come short? Can we find a better answer than St. Paul's? They did not judge themselves. They did not resolutely discriminate, in the multitude of impressions that poured in upon them, which were to be entertained, which were to be repelled. They delighted in their energies, and were conscious that they were not given for nothing; but in what direction and to what end they should be used, who should guide them, this they were not careful to consider. They knew that there were in them highest aspirations; that they could not be, as some told them they were, earth-born. But how these aspirations should be in them, by whom they were bestowed, how they could exist in an element of corruption and death, were problems often entertained, never fairly grappled with, never resolved. Therefore if their habits and associations led them into the region of free philosophical inquiry, they were speedily convinced that religious people had misrepresented and

degraded man, treating him as a beast or a devil when he had the capacity for everything godlike and true. But they did not boldly enough ask whether this misrepresentation might not arise from a one-sided theory of the Gospel. They assumed that the Gospel itself denies the glory of humanity, which it proclaims more loudly than any philosophical system ever did, and which it reconciles with the facts of experience that seem to confute it. They reject the Apostle's doctrine and these facts together, and have at last to verify both in their own experience; finding that there is a flesh in each man as well as a spirit, and that if there is no one to humble and exalt the second, the first will make him its slave.

With some, of no less valour and nobleness, the experience comes in a different form. They betake themselves, not to speculation, but to civil life. They begin with scorning the practices of vulgar politicians; with the loftiest determination to do nothing which shall degrade their fellow-men, everything which shall raise them. But they find they have coarse materials to work with; those whom they would serve and enlighten do not understand them. They are provoked and become passionate. They revenge themselves for their high thoughts of the species by bitterness to individuals; they fall into despair, and probably at last are content to run along in the old rut, which they had exhorted all to forsake.

Some have had their minds formed in a different

atmosphere from either of these, and have looked upon both with profoundest pity or contempt. They have dwelt in quiet cloisters, amidst old religious associations, surrounded with the memories of other days. Their own they have mourned over, as degenerate and wretched, deficient in all chivalry and saintship. To cultivate these in themselves,—to escape as far as possible from this world in which it has been their trial to be cast,—have been their objects. They have been ready to make all sacrifices; they are fearless in following principles to their results; they would die to restore that which they find decayed and almost dead. But the habits of the time exhibit themselves mightily in these denouncers of it. Severe condemners of others, they too have lost the power of judging themselves. Awe of the unseen is mingled with the superstition which makes us subjects of the visible. The reverence for Sacraments which speak of Redemption and Communion with an Ascended Lord, rivets the chains which God uses these divine instruments to break. They desire a universal fellowship, and shut themselves in a closer, narrower circle, and invent new and more exclusive watchwords, till, weary of such palpable inconsistencies, they fly to a system which obliges them to accept the decrees of a mortal as a dispensation from those exercises of personal judgment to which St. Paul exhorts every Christian man.

I have chosen my specimens, not from the weakest

and worst, but from the strongest and best of our time—from those who might have been its truest champions,—that we may see better what our peril is, and how it is associated with that passion for criticism which, under certain conditions, I doubt not God intends us to cherish. And now let us see what helps we too have for recovering that power of criticizing our own acts, our own selves, which seems to have perished while we have been busy in trying and condemning all except ourselves.

VII. *When we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.*

Much is said in pulpits about the blessed effects of God's discipline upon men. But is it right to say that discipline does at once and of itself produce blessed effects? Is it your experience that the mere suffering of pain softens and subdues a man's character? Does it not often exasperate all his worst feelings? Does it not make him angry with God and with all men? I do not allude to particularly ill-disposed people, I would rather appeal to the best-disposed. I believe they would answer most readily, "Suffering has brought forth an amount of evil in us, which we did not know there was in us before." What I suspect *such* persons would add to the confession is, "And thanks be to God it did! Now we know ourselves a little better than we did before. Now we know Him a little better. For it is this revelation of what is dark in us which drives us to

His Light. It is because we find we can trust ourselves so little that we have learnt we may trust Him altogether. In us, that is, in our flesh, there is no good thing." So St. Paul's words have been made good to one and another of us: "Not I, but Christ that dwelleth in me."

What do such examples teach us? Surely they afford us a very wonderful hint as to the design of God's judgments. They are not mere punishments, though they may be that; they are not merely, or immediately, instruments of making a hard ground ready for seed or capable of bearing fruit, though this may be the ultimate result of the process. But first of all St. Paul's words must explain the object of it. The voice out of the whirlwind, the still small voice which follows, is to awaken in us that slumbering faculty, without which we are not truly men, because we are not truly showing forth the image of God. He comes amongst us that our criticism may be turned to a more practical, as well as in truth to a more glorious service, that the power of saying to this thought and inspiration, "Go, and it goeth," and to that, "Come, and it cometh," may not be utterly taken away from us; that we may not be the passive slaves of the influences to which at one moment or another we are exposed, that we may not, in the language of the text, "*be condemned with the world.*"

What does this language import? what is the condemnation from which this judgment rescues us?

The world, considered as apart from God,—considered as a society which frames its maxims and its practice without reference to Him,—this world is condemned to a very hopeless kind of darkness. Its members cannot see any light which should guide their own footsteps, for they confess no light but what proceeds from themselves. They are always stumbling against each other, never doing justice to each other, for the same reason. We are saved from this condemnation, when God makes us sure that He is with us, that He is guiding us,—that He cares for other men as well as for us, that He is shining upon them as well as upon us. We are saved from this condemnation, when we are sure that He has revealed Himself as reconciling men to Himself in His Son, as binding them together in His Sacrifice, as guiding them by a Spirit who dwells with each and with all. All God's chastisements are to show us how little we have understood the relations in which we stand to each other, what hard judges we have been of our fellows,—how miserably tolerant we have been of the selfishness which keeps us apart from them. All God's chastisements therefore are to purge the Church of its worldly elements, not by making it censorious and exclusive (for these are essentially worldly elements), but by making each man see in himself all the evil which he has detected in his brother; in his brother, the image of that Lord Whom he desires to behold when the night is past and the day has dawned.

There are some national chastisements, brethren, which are more terrible perhaps in the eyes of God and of His saints than wars, famines, pestilences. When terrific crimes are perpetrated in a land, when they are even suspected, and the evidence which makes them probable awakens no awe in those who hear it and in those who read, but only the excitement of hearing some new thing, the satisfaction of finding something to break the monotony of existence,—perhaps a certain admiration of evil when it puts on an unusual and a gigantic shape,—then surely that land should know God's judgments are upon it; then each citizen of it should ask himself, "What is this judgment to do for me?" and the answer still arises in St. Paul's words: "It is to make thee judge thyself, that thou mayest not be condemned to that indifference which is so fearful a characteristic of a God-denying world." Such possibilities of evil lie in that nature of which I am a sharer! Such possibilities of evil, which moral and religious influences do not prevent from ripening into actual enormities! God of our fathers! reveal to us the possibilities of good which lie hid for all of us in Thine Own Self! Reveal to us the Redemption from evil which Thou hast wrought for us in Thy well-beloved Son! Enable us to disclaim the curse which lies so near to each of us, that we may claim the blessing which Thou hast made the inheritance of all! Grant that Thy judgments here may bring us to such

a right judgment of ourselves and of Christ, that when He shall appear as the Judge of quick and dead, we may say, "This is our God; we have waited for Him. He is come to save us from our darkness; He is come to take away the covering which is cast over the nations. He is come to fill the whole earth with His light."

Sixth Sunday after Trinity.

July 19, 1857.

ROMANS VI. 5.

"FOR IF WE HAVE BEEN PLANTED TOGETHER IN THE LIKENESS OF HIS DEATH, WE SHALL BE ALSO IN THE LIKENESS OF HIS RESURRECTION."

IN the Collects of the Church we have often been taught to speak of Christ taking our nature and suffering our death. That this language is strictly copied from St. Paul,—and not copied merely, but impregnated with his spirit,—no one, I think, who studies his Epistles can dispute. But St. Paul uses also a kind of language which, though quite in harmony with this, must not be confounded with it. He does not only speak of our Lord being made like to us, but of our being made in His likeness. And he does not limit this mode of expression, as we might expect him to limit it, telling us that we may be made holy like Christ here, or be made glorious like Christ hereafter. He speaks of our death being cast in the mould of His Death; of His being the only standard by which we can measure, the only type by which we can un-

derstand our own: "We have been planted together in the likeness of His Death." Evidently we should dilate this phrase most unwarrantably, we should reduce it almost to nothing, if we took it to mean only that, as Death came upon Him, so it must come upon each of us. We knew that before; it required no evidence to convince men that death was a fact with which every child of Adam has to do. But men did need to know what this fact signified. It was as strange and monstrous as it was indisputable. Though it was the great commonplace of the world, each new case exhibited some new variety of it; it was essentially individualizing, though it was universal. You got no nearer to the sense of it by collecting the greatest number of instances and generalizing from them; you felt that such a process took you away from the reality. You were in closer contact with it while you were watching one actual death-bed, than while you were reasoning about a thousand; and yet, if you found it suddenly staring you in the face, laying its skinny hand on you, even that experience was felt to be most imperfect. Men have always wanted to know, men do want to know, what Death is, as well as what Life is; and they have always felt that the finest, sagest, divinest definition, if it proceeded from the lips of God Himself, could not tell them.

I. "We are planted together in the likeness of His Death." Will the consideration of His Death then remove the veil which is over our own At first, you

would say, "Oh no! There may be honour, there may be glory in this record, but there is nothing which I can connect with myself, or with my fellow-men. Here is death with every possible aggravation, bodily and spiritual; Death without the sense of Retribution and Justice; Death involving inward agony; the sense of divine desertion. Have we been planted in the likeness of this death? we who are guilty, in the likeness of that which is perfectly innocent? we who often pass so easily out of the world, in the likeness of this bodily anguish? we who feel so little what it is to enjoy or to want a Father's Presence, in this likeness of Him Who cried, 'Why hast Thou forsaken Me?' Surely it cannot be. This Death may, in some marvellous manner, by some divine decree, affect us infinitely, but how can we dare to think of that which befalls us, except as presenting the most awful contrast to it?"

This objection to St. Paul's language is twofold. The fearfulness of our Lord's Death forms one part of it; the perfect holiness and innocency the other.

(1.) With respect to the first, let us remember that we are inquiring for the essential nature and character of that which every human creature, which the whole human race, has felt to be the curse whereof every other that exists is a part, whence every other is derived, in which every other terminates. You are asking, solemnly, earnestly asking, to see it apart from any qualifying accidents which may come to

particular sufferers through ignorance of its nature, through any gracious mitigations, through the want of participation which one has in the misery of another. A plague, or the rout of an army, slays its hundreds of thousands. Each one dies by himself; you cannot add up the different experiences, and yet every one groan speaks out a portion of the universal woe. Is not that glimpse which you have of death here in this one Person a glimpse of death *itself?* Does not the conscience of each feel, has not the conscience of Christendom felt, that it is? You could not take away anything you read of in the Gospels or in the Twenty-second Psalm. You would take away something that belongs to the very nature of death if you did. The Gospels speak as they always do, with intense simplicity. No word is wasted, every comment is spared; not one miserable shred of human eloquence is allowed to mingle with the stern record of facts. In the Psalms there is the inward history, and a history so exact and human that it has expressed to thousands in every age what they had known in themselves only the more because they felt there was an infinite beyond, into which they could but just look. We cannot then deny the truth of the words, because His Death was one of concentrated human and divine sorrow. If there were not this depth in it, you could not see in it the archetype of all other sorrow.

(2.) But the other reason seems at first sight far

more decisive. The one Death concentrating all that is pure and holy, the other the very stamp and witness of sin. Mighty as this difference seems, if we admit the language of Scripture, the belief of the Church, we must awfully feel that it had been in some way extinguished; that the Perfectly Holy did bear sin; that His death made it possible for sinners to be holy. And this belief has always been associated with the belief that His Death was a voluntary sacrifice. Herein its holiness, its perfectness, its power consists. Death had been felt to be a dark necessity, the submission to a power which was not human, not divine, and yet which must be obeyed. Good men had tried to feel differently; had in a measure been able to feel differently. They had given themselves up to God for sorrow or joy, for life or death; they had, especially in vigorous action, realized the conviction that He only was their Lord. But there was something in the character and conditions of Death, when they looked directly at it, when they contemplated it in reference to themselves, which seemed to enforce a different view. It seemed scarcely right, scarcely consistent with the sense they had of evil and punishment, not to regard it as a horrible separation, a deep abyss, as something into which the light of God's countenance did not penetrate. Our Lord's Death is the one termination—need we fear to say it?—the one possible termination, of such a state of feelings. Only, if Death can be contemplated at

once in its most dreadful aspect, of a division from all creatures,—in the inward being, from God Himself,—and as an entire, cheerful, absolute surrender of a child to a Father, is its dark contradiction explained, its sting taken out. When once such a manifestation had been made, it might be said to all creatures, "Behold the likeness of your death! You have never seen it till now. You have never known either its horror or its blessedness, either its curse or its sweetness. Here you see it all. Henceforth look not for it in its particular forms and cases; in other men or in yourself. Look at it here. The Cross is the only interpreter of it." This only shows you its individual, its human, its divine signification. To investigate the wounds of the thousand fiery serpents which have been torturing each human conscience, is as impossible as by that process to cure them. Turn to the one Brazen Serpent; see the Death of man translated into the Death of the Son of God, and you know both what the bite is, and that it is healed. While we are busy with our own selfish experiences, with aggravating our tortures, and not our tortures only, but our sin, in the hope of making amends for one and being delivered from the other, there can be only an ever-increasing contradiction, a deepening evil, in all that we think and do. Each new search for a solution of the puzzle makes us feel it to be more hopeless and infinite. Believe this to be the real likeness of your death, and you will find,

as you contemplate it, the power which there is in it to destroy that which is the poison of Death, its selfishness. We have been planted together in the likeness of this Death. It is a solitary thing no longer. Here we know it to be the centre of attraction and unity to the whole race. Accordingly, the most simple, most childlike penitents have proved the deep philosophy of St. Paul to be a truth for themselves. Under the dark overwhelming sense of the Death in themselves, and the evil which, in themselves, is inseparable from it, they have turned to the death upon the Cross. In their despair they have been led to the bold, marvellous conviction, that they could find the true likeness of that which had been all dark, in this clear and perfect light. Nothing seemed to them at first so amazing a paradox; nothing proved itself at last to be so undoubted a truth. For there can be no demonstration like that which comes through the disappearance of confused, superstitious, selfish doubts from the heart; through the discovery of real union with our fellow-men, where we had thought was the very root of division; through the melting away of pride, and the growth of childlike submission; through the apprehension of a Father in Whom is no darkness at all, where darkness seemed to reign absolute and alone. And a willing surrender of self, peaceful dependence, calm hope, sympathy with every suffering human creature; these are the further attestation, known and read of all men, that those do not follow a cunningly devised fable, who habitually turn to Christ's

Death as that in the likeness of which they have been planted. In every service, in every Eucharist especially, we proclaim the same truth; if we deny it, the act we engage in is a mockery. Oh! that it were not so often a mockery! Oh! that we did deliberately and continually assure ourselves that it has the most real foundation! We who kneel at the altar are not a set of creatures divided from each other by a set of little, partial, contemptible interests, only united by that great curse which is at last to terminate those interests and our connection with each other. This Death,—this common Death,—the Death of Him Who died for all, is that in the likeness of which we are planted; here is the bond of perfect human fellowship, here is the assurance that Death cannot break the bonds which hold us to each other, because the Love which established them had, in death, proved itself to be stronger than Death.

II. And therefore the Eucharist combines inseparably, as St. Paul's words combine, Death and Resurrection. We have been planted together in the likeness of His Death; we shall be in the likeness of His Resurrection. One assertion is the ground and assurance of the other. For what is the likeness of His Resurrection? If Death be the division of man from man,—of each man in himself,—of the race from God; Resurrection must be the reverse of all these, it must import that each creature is again at one with itself, with its fellows, with God. If Death import a surrender to God, as of a child to a Father;

Resurrection must import that the surrender has been accepted. He Who had felt forsaken of God, rose again in the glory of the Father; He Who had cried, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me!" was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption. He Whom all His disciples forsook, stood among them and said, "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, so send I you." Finally, He Who said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit," breathed on them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit." It is proved that His union with the Father was not broken in that hour in which He poured out His soul to death. By that union His human soul is quickened, His human body is quickened; by it He becomes the source of a divine life to all creation. We cannot describe His Resurrection in the words of the Bible, without implying that it is a Resurrection for us as well as for Himself; that we are planted together in the likeness of it. Therefore in the Epistle for this day, our Baptism is spoken of as grounded upon the Resurrection as well as the Death of Christ, as adopting us into the meaning and the power of both. Christ has died: we are bound, St. Paul says, to reckon ourselves as dead to sin. Christ is risen: we are bound to reckon ourselves alive to God. It is not that we are to make out a title to one privilege or another. He has proved the title. It is not that our faith creates the privilege. We are but called upon to believe that which is true. We do not plant ourselves in the likeness of His Death by an

effort of our belief. We *are planted* in it. What we are required to do, is to acknowledge the fact; not to make Death an everlasting contradiction and lie; not to make ourselves an everlasting contradiction, by determining that we will be without a centre, that we will each die a separate death, and live—no, that is impossible—we cannot live a separate life. Life implies union, fellowship, a common head; the denial of it is suicide. And if we are willing to confess a fellowship in the groans and Death of humanity; if we are willing to offer up ourselves cheerfully for Death, believing that a Father, not an enemy, receives the offering, and that we present it in His Name Who has offered up Himself once for all, the other gift is contained in this. These souls cannot perish if His has not perished; these bodies cannot perish if He has brought His back from the grave. As He had no life apart from His Father, we have no life apart from His. The renewal of life in Him, from its source and fountain, was the renewal of all creation. We have a right to say that the dreariest winter contains the pledge of a spring. We have a right to say that we cannot look into the heart of Death without discovering the certainty of a nobler birth. We have a right to say that nothing in this wide world lies out of the law of Christ's Cross and Passion, and that therefore there can be nothing which is not overshadowed by His Resurrection, and which has not the capacity of a glorious life.

Seventh Sunday after Trinity.

July 26, 1857.

ROMANS VI. 23.

"FOR THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH; BUT THE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD."

To make the antithesis in this verse more striking and evident, St. Paul has left out the verb in each clause of it. Perhaps you may think that if our translators supplied a verb, they might as well have put it in the future tense as in the present. They might have said, "The wages of Sin *will be* Death," not "is Death." "The gift of God *will be* Life," not "is Life." I suspect they were quite right. They would have destroyed the force of the words, and their connection with those which precede them, if they had given this form to their version. And what is more, they would have destroyed the connection between the Apostle's language and our own daily experience.

I. St. Paul is not telling us of some time when the Righteous God will call us to account for sins which we have committed, and will inflict death as the punishment of them. He is contemplating the subject from

a point of view altogether different. He says that every man has two masters, either of whom he may serve, but one of whom he must serve. He may be the servant of Sin; then he must take its wages. They are slavery and death. He may be the servant of Righteousness; then he will have all the freedom, energy, life, he is capable of. This is his statement, which, whatever elucidation it may require, cannot, you see, be identified with that of which I have just spoken. You cannot look upon the Righteous God as the author of Death, unless you look upon Him also as the author of Sin; for one is said to be the fruit of the other. You must look upon Him as the Deliverer from death; the Giver of eternal life.

If you ask me whether you are not to confess a real dominion of God over all things and all persons in this Universe, or whether you are to suppose two rival beings, with different objects and powers for effecting them, I answer, "Assert the real dominion of God over all persons and things, and then you will know what the Apostle means by *Sin;* yes, and what *you* mean by it." The denial of that dominion over things, over other persons, over yourself, is Sin. The desire not to be under a Righteous Ruler, to break loose from Him, to be outside of Him—this desire cherished, gratified, fed upon, till the sense of government is gone, or till the government is supposed to be just the reverse of what it is, expresses the nature of Sin. Each man, in the depth of his own nature, is

trying to be by himself, to live independently. The efforts which he makes to achieve this independence are his different acts of homage and fealty to an *unrighteous* power; each of these efforts, the Apostle says, is rewarded by that power; wages are paid for it; the wages is Death. There is no assertion of a rival creator, from whom certain things and certain persons have derived their being, or who has some right over them. By the assumption, everything that lives, every person that lives, is God's. No one else has or can have a right in any flower, or insect, or man. Every flower, insect, and man, according to its own qualities and capacities, owes Him obedience; if any creature has the capacity of putting itself out of its obedience, and uses that capacity, it falls under death. By saying that a creature *sins,* we say that it has *this* capacity, and has used it. It chooses not to be under Rightcousness; it prefers to be out of God's Order.

I. The Apostle says, "The wages of Sin is Death." Do not you say the same continually? "That man," you say, "is paid for his idleness. His estate is gone to waste. His house is in confusion. He began in comfort; he has ended with being a beggar. That man is paid for his self-conceit. He valued no one's opinion but his own. He thought he knew the world better than any one. He has become the victim of a thousand cheats and sharpers. That man is paid for his gluttony and sottishness: look at his premature

feebleness of body and soul; he cannot gratify one of the appetites which he exists to gratify. How the passion of envy with which that poor wretch tormented every one else is turned inwards, and is tormenting himself!" These are a few instances of a form of speech which is habitual with us. It signifies that men are paid in kind for that which they do, or think, or feel amiss. We secretly confess that it would not be so, if Right did not govern on this earth as well as everywhere else; but we confess also that Right is not the cause of the punishment, but that wrong is. Sin pays the wages. And the effect, you perceive, which we dwell upon, is always some disability to do the thing the wrong-doer wants to do or ought to do. Some power which he has is crippled. Some spring of life is dried up. St. Paul's words, then, are found to be a safe and accurate generalization of all our partial experiences. Death, in one form or other,—the death of some energy which the man wields, the death ultimately of him who has the energies,—is the wages.

So far we can see; the prospect, as we look further into the future, becomes darker still. Can you tell in the least what is to stop the progress of this death? the continual aggravation of it? Can you predict, by anything you see in your fellow-creatures or feel in yourselves, that then—just at such a moment—the evil habit which has been growing stronger and stronger will be abandoned, or will be less destructive? Where did you discover that law? Who told you that

the man, being in a regular process of decay, would suddenly or gradually recover? Or who gave you the least hint that death, when it had laid hold of all that was worth anything in him, would terminate him? Experience did not; your conscience did not. And why is it then that you feel that inevitable descent so outrageous, so contradictory to all your thoughts and intuitions, to your affections and to your reason, and to something in you which you do not know how to name, but which, now and then, you would almost call faith? Who will tell you? St. Paul takes upon himself to tell you. He is not satisfied with this fatal rule, this endless gravitation, any more than you are. He boldly affirms that there is another law besides this. "The gift of God is Eternal Life in Jesus Christ our Lord."

II. "Another Law!" some one will exclaim. "No such thing; the Apostle speaks of a 'Gift.' It is conferred by the good pleasure of an Omnipotent Being; to introduce any notion different from this, is to subvert the doctrine of the Epistle." Most assuredly, if we put 'wages' for 'gift,' we shall destroy the contrast which St. Paul presents to us altogether; we shall bring Life under the conditions of Death. But we found that when men began to receive their sin-wages, they were not submitting to the law which they were created to obey, but breaking it; they earned the reward of slavery and death, because they *chose* to break it. What then was the Law? A law

of simple dependence on One Who does not pay, but who gives; from Whom we take, not as bargainers so much price for so much work done, but the power of working, the privilege of working; Who does not remit so much punishment in consideration of so many petitions offered, but Who gives the privilege and ability to pray; Who does not return so much praise to us for so much praise rendered to Him, but confers the wonderful gift and energy to praise, the joy and freedom of being grateful, the still higher power of giving Him thanks, not only for what He *does*, but for what He *is*, for His own great glory. The Apostle has gathered up the fragments of our own experience; now he preaches a Gospel which surmounts all our experience, and yet which confirms it all, and translates it to a higher ground. Before, the man seemed bound to the car of a stern, hopeless Necessity. He has sown the wind, he must reap the whirlwind; he has destroyed himself. All nature seems to ratify the sentence; at least she cannot reverse it. His own conscience approves it. That conscience owns that the message, "The wages of Sin is Death," has issued from the highest judgment throne of the Universe. But He Who sits on that judgment throne proclaims that His desires are not satisfied when His creatures suffer from the want of Righteousness. He can only be content when He has made them righteous. He formed men after His own image, in His own likeness. If to be sepa-

rate from Him is eternal death, to be ever with Him must be Eternal Life. And that union with the Creator is not something strange and impossible for the creature, so that Death is the rule, Life the exception. No! Death always has been, always must be, the breach in God's order,—Life always has been, must be, the fulfilment of it. The man never has been able to tear himself from God, though he has laboured mightily, desperately, to do so. In a thousand ways he has felt that he was receiving gifts from God, as well as wages of his own deserts. Every sunrise and sunset, his daily food, every kind word, every friendly pressure of the hand, has been a gift, a divine gift, no part of his wages. He is compassed round with gifts; they are pressing upon him continually. He feels that he is amidst gifts which he ought to be receiving through every pore of sense and soul; which ought to be awaking every pulse in him to Life; which ought to be sending a stream of calm, healthy, joyous life through him at every moment. They do not; he has the cold heart of the hireling; he wants to make out his title to what is bestowed upon him; he wants to appropriate it, to shut out others from it. And therefore there is this terrible load upon his spirit, this ever-augmenting load of Death. Unless that can be taken away, the cheerful world is only another part of his torment and curse. He would rather it did not smile upon him, woo him to a joy and sympathy which he cannot render. Unless then

there is some other gift better than all these; unless it is the gift of Life itself, of the power of living, not merely a call to Life; unless there is some source from which this gift may always be renewed; unless it is a gift which is nearer to the man himself than all those things which he has looked upon, and in which he has been unable to delight; unless it is as near to him as the Death which seems so very near; unless it is mightier than that, and is a deliverance from it, the man must still go on receiving his wages; though he may have the tokens that he is the child of a King, and the witness in him that he was meant to be his Father's steward and almoner.

III. But the gift of God is Eternal Life *in Jesus Christ our Lord. This* is the better gift which contains that wherein all others are defective; the gift of a well of water, not lying outside of the man, at which he may slake his thirst now and then, but springing up *in* him; the gift, not of a refreshing influence, but of a Person from Whom the influence comes, and in Whom he may find that perpetually which only visits him occasionally; the gift of One who delivers the spirit from its own proper burden; Who speaks to those that are heavy-laden with their own selfishness, and bids them rest in Him the meek and lowly; the gift of One Who does not exact joy and sympathy and love, but kindles them and bestows them. Here is the Eternal Life, the only Eternal Life of which St. Paul knows anything. The phan-

tasm of some felicity which a man is to inherit hereafter, as the reward of his services here, could give no rest or comfort to a man toiling and suffering as he was. He wanted One upon whom he could cast his sorrows, fears, sins, every hour; One from whom he could always draw a strength and nourishment to sustain him against the continual sentence and pressure of Death. If there was such a One with him then, he could believe that He would be with him always; that neither height nor depth, life nor death, nor things present nor things to come, would separate him from His love. His life must be Eternal Life; it could not be a changeable, inconstant treasure, here today and gone tomorrow. But it must be a gift fresh every day; not a property which he could claim as if it had been made over once for all to *him*. It must be a gift of God, which he would enjoy while he trusted in God, which he lost whenever he fancied that he had earned it. It must be a gift therefore for all as well as himself, one of which he could preach to all, one of which he could say to them, "You have it, however little you may know that you have it. As surely as you carry Sin within you, so surely is He within you Who is the enemy of Sin; as surely as you have Death with you, so surely have you Life with you; as surely as you may possess the one for your wages, so surely may you accept the other for the gift of God."

I am persuaded, brethren, that this is the Gospel

which St. Paul proclaimed whithersoever he went, among Jews, Gentiles, Romans, Barbarians. If it had been any other—if he had spoken of a distant Christ, of a partial Deliverer, of a Christ Who had not effected the salvation of mankind, of a Christ Who had not entirely taken away sin by sacrifice of Himself; of a plan of salvation, not of a personal Saviour, an actual root of Eternal Life to God's creatures—he would have endured no persecution, established no Churches, left no treasures for the ages to come. Oh! once again may the same word go forth, may it come with the demonstration of the same Spirit! Once again may we be told that the Kingdom of Heaven is not to appear some day with observation, but is among us and in us, that we may submit to it and live in it; that it may subdue all kingdoms to itself! Once again may that good news be heard, in every corner of this land, by all classes of this land, which has power to make them citizens and freemen and workmen of God, not the poor pensioners and tools of Mammon! For, brethren, it is a *Gospel*, it is *good news*, which should be heard from these pulpits, *not* debates and arguments. You sometimes complain that in your law-courts each side is heard fairly, but here one person says what he likes without the danger of refutation. The complaint is reasonable. If we are occupied in proving points, in overthrowing adversaries, our false reasoning ought to be exposed; the adversaries should have the opportunity of defend-

ing themselves. And if we are the ministers of the God of Truth, we must wish anything untrue we have said to be detected; if we are ministers of mercy to men, we must wish that they should be able to clear themselves of any charges we bring against them. But we have mistaken our work, if we have supposed it is to establish certain propositions or to put down those who dispute them. Our occupation is a mockery if we are not ambassadors from God, if we are not authorized to proclaim what His Will is, to one man and to all men; what He has done, and is doing, to make that will effectual for one man and for all men. Do you think, if we fulfilled that function honestly, if we spoke out that message boldly, we should, on the strength of some authority of ours, be stifling objections? I tell you we should be raising a host of the ablest, subtlest objections in the heart of every man who listened to us. I tell you that instead of quiet, sleepy acquiescence, the human spirit would be stirred in its very depths to ascertain whether we were uttering lies, or speaking the thing as it is. Whatever we may boast of our authority and commission, however we may try to stop doubts and questionings, when such a word has gone forth there must be internal controversies which no man can silence, internal convulsions to which another voice than ours must speak peace. For the cause is then found to be taken out of our hands; it must be decided elsewhere. What are supposed to be names in a book start into awful

realities, mighty powers. The man knows that they are struggling for him. He has to say whether he will be Sin's hireling or God's freeman; whether he will have Death as his proper necessary wages, or receive Eternal Life as a gift which belongs to him, because he is the child of God and has been called to inherit His own nature and glory.

Day of Humiliation.

October 7, 1857.

LUKE XV. 18.

"I WILL ARISE AND GO TO MY FATHER, AND WILL SAY UNTO HIM, FATHER, I HAVE SINNED AGAINST HEAVEN AND BEFORE THEE, AND AM NO MORE WORTHY TO BE CALLED THY SON."

I THINK you must have felt this day that our old prayers—what we call our Common Prayers—are really more special prayers, more adapted to the circumstances of this time, more expressive of what is in our hearts, than those into which the words "India" and "mutiny" have been introduced. While we were using the ones, all that we have been hearing and reading for the last two months came into our minds. The prayers of the Liturgy were for the widows and fatherless we know; for the prisoners and captives we have heard of; for those in necessities and tribulations that we can just dream of but cannot understand. On the other hand, those which forced our thoughts directly to these topics seemed to want something which could not be filled up. What was it? I think, brethren, it was this. The new prayers are ad-

dressed to an Almighty God Who is displeased with us, Who may be merciful to us. The others are addressed to an Almighty and Most Merciful Father. That gives them their common character; that also gives them their special character. We can, as members of one Family, all join in them together. But they meet all events that befall the different members of the Family in one age or another, in one part of the world or another. They belong to all times of our tribulation and to all times of our wealth.

I have not chosen my text merely because I suppose it is suitable to any humiliation-day. I do indeed think there can be no humiliation and no prayer which is not grounded upon it; that our humiliation is true when it is the humiliation of children; that all prayer wants life, unction, confidence, which is not the prayer of children. But I believe also that its words contain the very consolation which those want who are enduring the anguish of retrospect, the anguish of anticipation, for those who are dearest to them; that they contain every satisfaction which those want whose minds have been staggered with doubts whether the world is not left to the mercy of the Power of Evil; that they suggest what is the sin for which we have to humble ourselves this day; that they give us a clear indication of the work we have to do, of the hope we may cherish in the time to come.

I will endeavour to draw out the lessons I have found in them on each of these points.

I. I have spoken of consolation. If they were my words and not Christ's, how dare I even think that this gift could be hidden in them? To those who are suffering, as some in every English neighbourhood, in every English congregation, are suffering, all ordinary phrases and topics of consolation must be intolerable. But think how universal these are, think how individual they are! It is the *prodigal* who speaks them. None can say, "By some course of thought or action of mine I have excluded myself from the right to use them." It is the prodigal *son* who speaks them. None can say, "I must make myself a son; I must establish my relationship to God before I claim the full sense and virtue of them." And what is that full sense and virtue? Who can express it? But this must be a part of it, a very little part: I must assert that God is my Father in Jesus Christ His only-begotten Son; and if mine, then the Father of every one of those who are related to me in this or in any land, who have been taken from me by the course of nature or the violence of men. I must have a right, it must be a duty, to arise and go to Him and say, "Father, these were redeemed by the precious blood of Thy dear Son. Thou hast loved them with a love that I cannot measure. All the imperfect love I ever had for them has flowed from Thine. The failures in that love which I have confessed to Thee so often, which I confess now as I never did before, were failures to be what Thou wouldst have me be, failures to be like

Thyself. I know that what in me was full of flaws in Thee is without flaw. I know that the measure of it was the sacrifice of Thy Son; that there is the full, the only full revelation of it. Thanks be to Thee, Thy fatherly love to me is not determined by my sense of it, my belief of it, else what would become of me! It cannot be determined by the sense of it, by the belief of it, in any creature. It must be higher than heaven, deeper than hell,—how can I grasp it? I am content to cast myself upon it, to cast all upon it. Thy ways are unsearchable. They baffle me utterly. But Thy purposes are certain. They are revealed to us and to our children. I believe that Thy Son prayed in His agony, 'Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me,' and that it could not pass from Him; that He drank it. I believe that was the hour of the Power of Darkness, but that that was also the hour of the Power of Light; that then Good was shown to be mightier than Evil, once and for ever."

II. It is in the act of arising and going to the Father, in the exercise of prayer, that such persons will learn secrets of which I know nothing. But there are some who will not at once be driven to this resource, who will rather be driven from it by the tidings which day after day brings to them. "What does it all mean?" will be their demand. "Can the words we have been used to hear and to utter about a good Providence have been honest words? If there is an eye of justice and mercy looking upon our doings and suf-

ferings, why was this person, and this, and this, left to bear actually more than we can bear to speak or to think of?" This terrible inquiry will come to those who have been brought up in habits of belief as much as to the trained sceptic. I do not know that it will scare one more than the other. In the last century the Lisbon earthquake led Rousseau to write his letters on Optimism. He was nearly mad already. It would have driven him actually mad not to think that all things were somehow tending to good; that even the worst calamities befalling the innocent did not prove that opinion to be false. The philosopher of Ferney answered him in the story of Candide. The notion "everything is for the best," applied to particulars, was exhibited as utterly ridiculous. Madame de Staël may have been right in describing this story as the grinning of an ape at the miseries of humanity. But there was much in that grinning which the understandings, even the consciences, of men felt to be true. A general maxim or theory of the universe does not meet individual cases. It breaks down, the moment the particular instance occurs to which we need that it should be applied. If we did not know that this was so before, we know it now. The moralities which we have contented ourselves with, in reading of deeds of blood and horror in the pages of past history, die upon our lips,—we actually loathe them,—when any one rehearses them with solemn confidence about Delhi or Cawnpore.

No! a scheme of optimism must fail utterly at such times as these. A man asks himself, "What have I done that I should be better off than any of those who have fallen? Were not these men many of them nobler and more righteous—were not these women fairer and brighter than I can claim to be? Oh, why did the thunderbolt strike them first?" Such thoughts must arise within us, they ought to arise within us. But must not others come with them? "Why am I not left to a far worse calamity than to be the most wretched of the sufferers? Why am I not one of those who have done the wrong? Are they not also creatures of my own flesh and blood? Do not I carry within me their propensities, their capacities of evil? Why have I anything but these propensities, but these capacities? Whence comes this horror of such evils? this consciousness of something directly, absolutely opposed to them? this confession of a righteousness, a gentleness, a truth, with which I ought to be in conformity, which would work in me not the abstinence from such crimes merely, but all the acts by which mankind and the earth are blessed? Whence are these? Did civilization give them? Do not they constitute civilization? Is not civilization apart from them a name and a fiction, or else a synonym for the habits that weaken and impair manliness, courage, the reverence for women, sincerity, justice? Whence then are these? Is there not, must there not be a Father of Spirits from Whom they issue forth,

in Whom they dwell perfectly, absolutely? Is there not One Who is Justice, Righteousness, Truth, Love? I will arise and go to Him, and say, 'If Thou art, teach me of Thyself. Teach me whether it is true, as I am told in a book which my parents revered, that Jesus Christ the Righteous, the Gentle, the Faithful, is Thy Son, and that He is my Lord, the Lord and Head of every man. Teach me whether it is true that I am created in Him to be holy and unblamable before Thee in love, and that we are redeemed by Him to be Thy servants and to fight Thy battles in the world. And if this be so—seeing that this battle is going on in the world and in me, and that without Thee I must be worsted in it,—seeing that I have sinned against Heaven and before Thee in my outward acts and in my inner life—teach me whether Thou dost indeed quicken us with Thy Spirit of Truth and Righteousness, and whether Thou hast promised that all fires which try us most here shall be purifying fires, to overcome that in us and in the universe which is contrary to Thy Will, and destructive of our peace.' "

Thus, I believe, may the universal doctrine of optimism, being changed into the belief of a Father Who is Light and in Whom is no darkness at all, be reconciled with and confirmed by all those individual experiences which seem at first to contradict it. For there is no experience so individual as that of moral evil; when we feel that we need such a God as Jesus Christ

has revealed to us to be a deliverer from that, we know that what is most blessed for the world is most blessed also for us.

III. But how can such words as these help us to understand the evil acts which we are to confess this day? My brethren, if we consider first what good we have already derived from the events of the last three months, what kind of compensation there has been to us for the unspeakable calamities we have gone through and may still go through, I think we shall find an answer to this question also. Since we have had any possessions in India, has there ever been a time in which we have felt ourselves so closely bound to our fellow-citizens there as since the commencement of this mutiny? You talk of steam and of telegraphs as helping to annihilate space and time, but what have they done towards uniting the poorest peasants in England with those now fighting and perishing in a world thousands of miles away, like the crimes of the Sepoys? Here is a good—a good which may pass away,—which will pass away, unless we make an effort to preserve it,—but which is itself quite immeasurable.

There has been, no doubt, a mixture of feelings; but on the whole, the sense of a common humanity which has been awakened at home, even where it has merely taken the form of rage and horror at inhumanity, is something for which we should heartily give thanks. And by that good, judge of the wrong that there has

been in us. With all the connection which has been between us and India,—with all the responsibilities which we have in words confessed, how little have we actually known of its people and its doings! how little of the work which our own countrymen are doing or might do there! We have clear proof that no mercantile associations or interests will create the living sympathy which should exist, I do not say now, between us and the natives of any country we conquer, but between us and our own people who go forth to take any part in the government or defence of it. Commerce may be a glorious means of strengthening human ties if they exist, but commerce will not call them into existence; it may even hinder them from coming into existence.

And what does make it live and keep it alive? The acknowledgment of brotherhood must start from the acknowledgment of Fatherhood. If we believe that we have a Father Who has as much to do with one latitude as with another, Who has established a Family which He means to fill the earth, Who has made us one body in His Son,—then there is an extinction of time and space which no electricity can cause; then we may appropriate even in a wider sense than that in which he meant them, the words of the German patriot poet, and say that wherever God in heaven is praised in our tongue, there is the Englishman's fatherland.

Before, then, we find any fault with the Company or

with the Government, let us arise and go to our Father this day, and say: "Father, *I* have sinned against Heaven and before thee, in that I have been indifferent to the well-being and well-doing of my fellow-countrymen and countrywomen in India; in that I have not cared for those who are struggling bravely for the honour of the English name, and of justice and truth there; in that I have not helped to strengthen their arms, or to make them wiser and better if they were doing amiss. And I confess that by these miseries and punishments Thou art calling me to repentance for this sin, reminding me that I can only be faithful to Thee in England when I remember that England has had a mighty empire committed to her, for which she must render an account to Thee."

But that empire includes Hindoos and Mussulmans, as well as British subjects; the mutineers, as well as the victims. We are all, I suppose, agreed that for the sake of the first as much as of the last we must struggle to keep that empire. The question is not now how we came by the possession, not even whether we have a commercial interest in retaining it. Other nations, if they question our original title, if from any secondary reasons they wish our power weakened, feel that we shall be traitors to the cause of humanity if we do not exert ourselves to the utmost, that those who have outraged it may be righteously punished, that the land may not be left to their mercy. This, I say, we must do; not because we

regard Asiatics with the scorn and hatred which has been sometimes expressed for them recently, but because we regard them as made in the image of God, as intended by Him to share all the blessings that belong to Europeans. We cannot teach them of His true nature if we do not show them that He is a God Who maketh inquisition for blood; Who must have the land purged which has been defiled with it; Who, of old, destroyed cities where horrid crimes had been committed, and destroys them now. To make the forgiveness of God—and we are to forgive as He forgives, and only as He forgives—into tolerance of evil, is to pervert its nature fatally. The forgiveness which does not hate crime and seek for the extinction of it, which shrinks from the punishment of the crime, is devilish forgiveness, not Divine.

But if what is meant is that we ought not only to assert one part of the Divine character, but the whole of it, in our conduct to Hindoos and Mussulmans,—if it is meant that we have to answer for much of their inhumanity because we have not made them understand that the God Whom we worship is a Father, that we believe He has united Himself to man, and has redeemed mankind in His Son,—this I indeed believe,—this I would make a great subject of our confessions today. I do not think it is the business of the clergy to be bringing bitter accusations against the Company or the Government because they have not done more to favour the spread of Christianity in

Hindostan. I think we should rather be questioning ourselves whether we have been cultivating in our flocks, cultivating in our hearts, such a faith in Christ as will reform men and subdue the nations. When He stood on the mountains of Galilee, in the sight of the fishermen who were to be His messengers to the world, He did not say, "Go, and make them Galileans like yourselves." He did not say, "Go, and convert them from their religions to another religion." He said this: "All power is given me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And, lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." When we understand the length and breadth of this commandment; when we understand that the Son of Man has declared the Father to men, has established a Family in which every man has a right, has given us His own spirit, that we may be delivered from all partial and narrow notions which separate us from one another, and that we may be capable of showing forth the truth and charity of Him with Whose name we are sealed; then indeed we may find fault with Governments if they hinder us from proclaiming tidings which will be so mighty a help in removing the greatest difficulties in their own administration, —the oppositions and antipathies of races and classes, the insincerity and brutality which make intercourse impracticable and punishment inevitable. But when

we are possessed and penetrated with such a faith as this, we shall not spend our time so idly as in complaining of even the Governments that are most resolute to obstruct its progress. We shall remember that the whole powers of the Cæsars were found feeble before the words of a Jewish tent-maker. We shall be sure that no power can be matched against His Who rules in both worlds. But so long as we think of Christianity chiefly as a Western or English religion, which is to drive out different Asiatic religions, so long I think it is good for us to find lions in our path of proselytism. God, and not man, has put them there. He is teaching us that such proselytism is not what He demands of us, because it is not what will make the people He has committed to us a wise and righteous people. And He calls upon us to say to Him today: "Father, we have sinned against Heaven and before Thee, in that we have taken so poor a measure of that Gospel by which Thou hast built up a Christendom in this Western world, and hast converted our fathers from brutes into men. We have sinned against Thee, in that we have not taught our sons, whom we have sent forth to trade or to rule in any province of our empire, that they are servants of the Son of Man, and therefore are to treat all men as His brethren and theirs. We have sinned, and we pray that these tremendous conflicts we are passing through may be effectual in bringing us all to a better mind; that the sight of acts of horrible inhumanity

may drive us to seek for the deep root of all the humanity which is or ever has been in the earth; that the more we find men bowing to false and evil gods, the more we may shrink from any conception of Thee, but that which we derive from the perfect Image of Thyself which Thou hast set before us in Jesus Christ."

IV. I have already anticipated much that I meant to have said about our duties and our hopes in time to come. And here again I would remember the exact words of my text: "*I* will arise and go to my Father;" I would dwell upon what each may do, rather than upon the obligations—solemn as they are—that devolve upon our rulers. We heard a proverb last Sunday which was current in the minds of the Israelites during the Captivity: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." The prophet Ezekiel delivered an elaborate discourse on that text. He showed that the sour grapes of the fathers need not set any child's teeth on edge; that the sins of the ancestor might be most blessed and effectual warnings to the descendant. I suppose no proverb has been oftener applied in one form or another to our Indian dominion than this. "There was a wrong," it has been said, "in our original occupation of the country. Each person taking a part in the affairs of the country has been obliged to enter into the wrong. We can only be robbers and aggressors: if we suffer at last, the entail of curses has

been inevitable." So statesmen, doctors, politicians, even, I fear, divines, have spoken. But never has the prophet's doctrine been more fully borne out; never has the proverb been more signally refuted than by this very history of British India. No single man has gone forth with a determination, even with a desire, to do right and be right in any one office to which he has been appointed in that land, as civilian, military officer, chaplain, without finding that he was not committed to do evil by the acts of his forefathers; that he could confer unspeakable benefits on his fellow-subjects and on natives; that he could bring home a wisdom and experience to enrich us. Many even who have started with no distinct purpose but that of advancing their fortunes, when great trusts have been committed to them, have recollected the traditions and laws of their country, the teachings of their fathers and mothers, and have been converted into noble and beneficial rulers. Nay, the crimes and oppressions which our servants have done in that land have been turned through God's infinite mercy to our instruction, and have led us to reflect on the responsibilities of a mother-country as we never reflected on them before; they have given a new character to our politics. The greatest of English statesmen may have pursued with too relentless an hostility one whom he regarded as the chief of delinquents; but what an epoch in our history is marked by his speeches on India! We pass to them from the records of Court

and Cabinet intrigues, in which the early years of George III.'s reign were so abundant. It is like being transported at once from the noisomeness of a London alley to the free air of a Swiss mountain. And, remember, much of the good that has been done to India has been done in the very teeth of the superstitions which, it is said, we are under pledges to reverence. There are sacred theories about the causes of all physical phenomena: you trample upon those theories to teach the doctrines of Newton or Faraday. It is pollution and curse to touch a dead body: you have established schools of anatomy.

Why do I remind you of these things? Because they bear witness that wherever there is a clear conviction,—wherever there is an honest purpose,—that conviction, that purpose makes its way, in spite of the sins of past generations of Englishmen, in spite of the ignorance and prejudices of their subjects. It is not a question how much we shall give, how much we shall withhold. What we really have we must give; it is not a matter of choice; that we cannot withhold. If we are Atheists, we shall make Hindoos and Mussulmans Atheists. The Shasters and the Koran will not hinder the work: they will adapt themselves to the Atheism or will succumb to it. If we believe that God is the Father of men in Christ Jesus, that He has redeemed mankind in His Son,—if we hold this faith as firmly as we hold the law of gravitation—the Shasters and the Koran will be as

little able to withstand it. But this faith will not deal as ruthlessly with them as the physical faith does. Whatever is healthy, moral, human in them, it will recognize, it will claim; only what is unhealthy, immoral, accursed, it will destroy.

You must be merely assertors of a Western, Teutonic, English supremacy, unless you go forth as children of God to claim children for Him, brethren for yourselves. India asks you to do that, lest she should lose all the new culture you have given her, in the barbarous passions which it has not been able to overcome; lest she should lose all her old better religious culture, in the utter denial of God or the utter worship of a devil. England asks you to do that, for the belief which we carry forth to the remotest boundary of her empire will be the belief that will save or ruin us at home. If we have not a humanity that is large enough for India, we have none that will keep us from sinking into cowardice, effeminacy, brutality in our own land. The God or the Devil we proclaim there will be the God or the Devil to whom we offer ourselves or our children here.

And oh! brethren, if these dire calamities should indeed be the means of establishing us in this faith of a Father, of making us true heralds of it, how should we cherish the memory, even if we know not the names, of those who have died to obtain us such a blessing! England may weep over her children because they are not, but they will have fallen as those

children fell whom Herod slew, the witnesses and harbingers of a Redemption. Purged from all taint of earthly crime and pollution, their souls and their bodies will have been brought through much tribulation to join those who are crying under the altar for the deliverance of the earth from its oppressors. Though they were offered as sacrifices to devils, the incense of their sacrifice will ascend to God with that of the great sacrifice which was offered for the redemption and restoration of the universe.

Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity.

October 11, 1857.

MATTHEW XXII. 41, 42.

"WHILE THE PHARISEES WERE GATHERED TOGETHER, JESUS ASKED THEM, SAYING, WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST? WHOSE SON IS HE?"

MANY have thought and said that God is punishing us in India for not communicating our faith to the natives of it. I ventured to ask on Wednesday whether He may not, first of all, be calling upon us to consider what the faith is which we have to communicate. That which is stirring in us will make itself felt; that which we have we must in some way impart. May we not have rather to reproach ourselves for not believing than for not publishing our belief? May not the question which is presented to us all be—not, "Why have you not taught Hindoos and Mahometans of Christ?" but, "What think *ye* of Christ?"

When our Lord proposed this question to the Pharisees, He added, "Whose Son is He?" Their answer was unusually direct, "The Son of David." The Christ must unquestionably be a King, a Jewish

King, a King not elected, but descended from the royal house.

So much they had learned from the Scriptures; so far they could not be mistaken. We may say that they were merely exhibiting their narrow nationality by making such a reply; but our Lord does not say so. I apprehend that He would have desired them to be more, not less, national than they were. Their misfortune was, that they belonged to a sect, and had forgotten their condition as Israelites; they consorted with Pharisees, who thought as they did, despised publicans and sinners, who were as much children of Abraham as themselves. If they had really believed in a Son of David, if they had in their hearts expected such a Christ, they would have found that they wanted something more than a Son of David; the promised Christ would have burst upon their eyes as He did upon those of the old Rabbi Simeon. But Moses, David, the Prophets were to them names in a book: how could He, the subject of the visions, be more? Must not the unrevealed descendant be even more a shadow than the departed ancestor?

If our Lord then asked *us*, "What think ye of Christ?" we should probably *not* say, "The Son of David." We should avoid that description as coarse and earthly. But what would be our substitute for it?

I. One which is very frequent with us is, "The Founder of our Religion." To that we should be exceedingly likely to resort, if we were conversing

with a Brahmin or an Islamite. I am sure we mean something very real by that phrase; more, perhaps, than we like to speak; more than we know. It is used by many from a kind of shyness, in which there is a mixture of honesty. They dare not adopt more reverent language, lest they should profess more than they feel; they wish to show that they identify that name with the dearest traditions of their infancy, with that which they hold to be most sacred. I freely admit this; no one who knows anything of an Englishman's reserve,—at least no one who shares in it,—should make even his most awkward utterance the measure of his inward thought.

But if language is not a safe test of the character of an individual, it does indicate very much respecting the character of the society which has given it currency; and it may be fairly tested by the effect which it must produce on the mind of the most simple or of the most acute of our Asiatic subjects who hears it. The first will think that the Founder of the Religion of the whites has given them—not the best and strongest things that belonged to them—but the poorest and weakest, the thing for which they themselves in general care least. He has not given them their courage, strength, truthfulness; but only something besides all these, perhaps (who can tell?) the very thing which often makes them boastful, unjust, tyrannical. The subtle logician, on the other hand, —a class which is much more numerous there than

here,—will at once detect the curious inconsequence which is committed, the vicious circle which is described, by one who speaks this. "We ask you what your religion is, and you say it is a belief in the Christ. We ask you what the Christ is, and you say, He is the Founder of your Religion."

What impression will remain in the mind of either, but one of indifference or contempt? But have *we* not better, sadder reasons than they have for feeling that such a phrase is worse than weak—that it is frightfully profane? What has "our religion" been? Who will fix upon any period in the history of the world, since the coming of our Lord,—who will fix upon any place,—and say without blushing what the religion of that time or that place has been? An eminent and accomplished dignitary of our Church has written a history, exemplary for its learning and impartiality, of Christianity in the Early Ages, and of what he happily calls the Latin Christianity of the Middle Ages. What is the result? Most who read the story would feel as if it were the work of a stern satirist, not of a specially calm and mild narrator. So far as Christianity is identical with "*our* religion," so far as it is merely man's conception *about* God and His Kingdom and His Church, and man's attempt to realize these conceptions according to a method of his own, so far all is black and hopeless. And it is only because, through all this Christianity, we are able to see a Christ, ruling

the universe, not according to man's conceptions, but according to the eternal laws of Truth and Righteousness, and ever and anon bringing men to feel the poverty of their own conceptions, the wretchedness of their own realizations, and to cast down their imaginations and every high thing which exalts itself against His government, which prevents their being His servants;—it is only because the history of Christendom, from one end to the other, in one place or period of it as much as in another, if it is honestly told, testifies of this dominion, that the reading of it does not drive the student to Atheism and despair. There is no refuge from such Atheism and despair in the records of that Teutonic theory and practice of Christianity which has belonged to later times, any more than in the Greek or Latin theory and practice of it. What we have gained (and it is an infinite gain) is a demonstration that every attempt to substitute any system of religion or system of church polity for Christ, is resistance to God, and misery to man. But we have not gained any new power, we have lost much of the power which our ancestors possessed of constructing systems and making them work.

Oh! then, let us leave off thinking of Christ as the Founder of our Religion, lest we should think of Him as founding something which will perish when He appears, which will be burnt up in the fires of His judgment day.

II. An earnest and devoted missionary would feel

little tempted to adopt this language. He would say, "I think of Christ as my Saviour, my Lord and Master; I have found that without Him I cannot live or die. I find His service to be freedom. I would fain persuade all men to renounce every service but His." What power does a man with ever so little of general culture possess, who can speak such words because he feels and knows them to be true! What hidden sympathies he can awaken in hearts that have become petrified in an habitual Christianity,—in hearts that have grown up in hatred of Christianity! To such testimonies, borne by self-denying men whose actions were lively commentaries on all that they uttered, who could be trusted by men that had never before known what trust was, we may attribute most of the triumphs which Protestants—perhaps the best of those which Romanists—have won. And why have these triumphs been so few? Why do we look back on the conversion of nations as belonging wholly to another day—to another stage in the history of the world? Is it not that the missionary does not follow out to its consequences that thought of Christ which in its germ he holds with such a strong and heroic grasp? Why is there, ever and anon, that strange, unexpected response to his confession? Why does any Hindoo feel that there must be such a Saviour, such a Master as he speaks of? Why does any feel that that Master must be his? Can the earnest man who has yielded to Christ as a Master for himself, who

has ventured so much upon the possibility that he might find others who could receive Him also, stop short of that full conviction which was expressed by the Apostle of the Gentiles, which alone gave him strength to preach *his* Gospel, that Christ is the Lord of every man; that He is the Saviour of the World? Of course he *does* believe this, in a sense. It stands written; he cannot reject it; in his heart of hearts he would grieve to reject it. But I think the time must come when he will find that he cannot hold his former faith unless he grounds it upon this teaching of St. Paul—that he must cease to think of Christ as his Deliverer and Master, or, at all events, cease to think that he has any message to men, if he does not think of Him as Lord of Men; that while we practically, and almost in terms, disclaim that title for Him, we hold the few proselytes we do make upon a most insecure tenure, often puffing them up with a sense of their superiority to those from whom they have separated, which is fatal to their characters as Christian men; often tempting them to presume upon their profession, till they plunge into sins as great as those which they have renounced. Whereas the Gospel, according to St. Paul, lays the foundation of Christian Churches and Kingdoms—composed, indeed, of men with all evil propensities, liable to all the Jewish and Heathen errors and sins which he lays bare in his Epistles, but—held together by a Divine Spirit, and witnesses to all men of that which they are intended to be.

III. St. Paul had been bred in that faith which the Pharisees announced, when they said that Christ was the Son of David. Certainly he never renounced that faith. He was not converted from *it* when the vision on the way to Damascus told him that the Jesus whom he persecuted was the Christ.

That vision, he says, was the revelation that Christ was in him, that the King Whom he had looked upon as far off was the Lord of his heart and reins, was claiming the dominion there. But he did not believe Him to be less the King of his nation. He began at once to convince the Jews—and that publicly—that Jesus was their King; that they as a nation owed Him homage. And when he turned from them to the Gentiles, it was that he might declare the Son of David to be the Son of Man; that he might declare the King of the Jews to be the King of the whole earth. He had begun to understand why David in spirit called the Son that was to sit upon his throne, his Lord; how truly He had been the Lord of him and of all kings and holy men and prophets who had lived in the times of old; how they had sung of Him and spoken by Him, and declared His Name as the Head of the Everlasting Age and as the Prince of Peace, as the Man who was in the midst of the Throne. He perceived that the revelation of the latter day, the revelation which Christ made when He came in the flesh, and died, and rose, and ascended on high, was the revelation of the hidden Father; that

He came as the Son, not of David only, but of God, to adopt men into His family, to anoint them with the Spirit with which He was anointed. The new dispensation was not new because the Christ was now, for the first time, making Himself known. He had been before all worlds; His delights had been with the sons of men. Of His fulness had all received, and grace for grace. But it was a new dispensation, because He had emancipated and adopted that race which had been under tutelage and bondage, as the children of His Father; because the full name of God, and of the city of God, could now be written upon them. If we answer the question in the text as St. Paul answered it, we shall say, "We think of Christ as the King who led the Hosts of Israel through the Red Sea into the Land of Promise. We think of Him as the true King of all those nations in the old world which were dreaming of other kings and leaders, and moulding them after their fancies. We think of Him as the source of all that was righteous, true, and brave in the chosen people. We think of Him as the only source of what was righteous, brave, and true in all the Heathen people. We think of Him as having been made of the seed of David, according to the flesh; as having been actually born of a woman, and having actually died upon a Cross, that He might redeem the sons of women, that He might make reconciliation for all the sinners of the earth. We think of Him as declared by His

resurrection to be the Son of God with power, as ascending on high to lead captive men's captivity; as sitting on the right-hand of God in our nature, the representative of men. We think of Him as proving His kingdom over men by sending the Spirit of Love, Truth, and Unity amongst men, to fight with all spirits of falsehood, hatred, strife, that are rending them asunder. We think of Him as coming to judge and punish that nation which had set up its own righteousness against His, which had refused to acknowledge men as its brethren, which had given itself up to hypocrisy and cruelty and malice. We think of Him as the Judge of all nations, whether confessing His name or rejecting it; as separating in each between that which is good and evil, false and true; as pledged at last to burn what is false with fire unquenchable, and not to let anything perish which has any life and worth in it. We think of Him as the source of all manliness, freedom, gentleness, in the nations of Christendom; every unmanly, slavish, ungentle act which has been done by any Christian man, priest, king, noble, peasant, being therefore done in defiance of His authority, in resistance to His Spirit; and those acts being most criminal and hateful in His sight, most dark and devilish, when they have been done under pretence of exalting Him and putting down His enemies. "We think of him as the Giver, not of rain only and fruitful seasons, but of moral instincts, a sense of what is just and lovely,

a power of doing right and generous acts, to Pagans and to Mussulmans: we think of every Hindoo feeling respecting Incarnation, and Sacrifices as a feeling after Him Who could truly become one with men, and truly and perfectly offer Himself for men. We think of Him as the inspirer of the Mussulman belief in a One Living God, and of the Mussulman's wrath against idol worship. We think of Him as withering the strength of the Hindoo because he gave himself to unclean services and bloody sacrifices; as maintaining the cause of the Latin nations against Mahometanism because it divided man from God,—so reducing man into a slave, and turning God into a tyrant. We think of Him as fighting from age to age on behalf of the truth for which Romanists have been witnesses, that there is a one Family under one Head, united in one Father, possessed by one Spirit. We think of Him as fighting from age to age against that falsehood which has borne all detestable fruits in practice, that the Family on Earth has been separated from the Family in Heaven; that it has an earthly Lord, or an earthly Father; that the Spirit within it can ever be a Spirit working lies, and not the Spirit of Truth. We think of Him as fighting on the side of Protestants whensoever they are resisting these fictions and asserting the dominion of the Son of Man and the Son of God against His servants who usurp His name. We think of Him as fighting against Protestants, and baffling

and confounding them, whensoever they set up their sect notions and theories against His universal and eternal kingdom. We think of Him as the source of all national strength, valour, freedom, to England; of all her Art, Science, Justice; certain to go forth with her hosts whenever they are going forth in the cause of righteousness and humanity; certain to call her to strict account for every unrighteous and inhuman act or purpose, for the worship of gold or any false and cruel god which degrades those who serve him from upright men into base and grovelling animals. We think of Him as the Searcher of every heart now, as the Judge of the quick and dead hereafter. We think of Him as the King Who will reign till all powers, voluntary and involuntary, are made subject to Him."

IV. There is nothing in such statements as these which can seem new to any one; they are involved in the words which we repeat every Sunday—*His Son, our Lord.* There is not one of them which comes near to the comprehensiveness of St. Paul's language, where he speaks of Christ as the Head of all Principalities and Powers, and of every name that is named, whether in this world or in the world to come. And yet there is something in them which will clash not only with the conceptions of men who would confine the thought of Christ within a set of notions, habits, services, which they call religious; which notions, habits, services, are so distinguished from the other

occupations of their lives by their unreality, that the religious and the unreal come at last to be nearly synonymous expressions in their minds. I am afraid that many who give themselves credit for being unusually devout, nay, who have passed through periods of much sincere and fervent devotion, will think that the name of Christ loses its sacredness when it is brought out of the circle of their experiences into contact with the rough doings of the universe. And if the effect of any such thoughts of Christ as those I have set before you had a tendency to divide Him from the innermost sanctuary of the soul; to make the belief in Him, as a deliverer of the conscience from its burden of sin, less strong; to make Him more an outward ruler, less a ruler over the reason and the will; I admit that this is a mischief for which no good, at least that I can imagine, could be a compensation. For were that the effect of what I have said, it would conspire, I think, with all that is most dangerous in our existing religious tempers. They lead us far too much to think of Christ as belonging to the past, as only to be read of in a book; they hinder men from awakening up to the conviction, "Lo! He was with me here in this place, in this lonely night, in this stormy sea, when this Sepoy had his knife at my throat,—and I knew it not." Not to put the Son of Man at a distance from men, but to declare how near He is to them in all their daily toils, in all their least and greatest trials, would I recur to the language of

the Creeds and of the Scriptures respecting Him. Not to underrate the terrors of the conscience, or its need of deliverance; but to show how every Yogi torture, the burning of every widow, every superstition and every crime which superstition engenders, is the witness of these terrors, is a cry for that deliverance, would I claim that our thoughts of Christ should not be limited by the boundaries of Christendom. Not to show that there is any other name given among men which can set them free from this anguish; but to assert that the Son of God has explained the secret of it by showing that the sin of men is rebellion against a Father, and has sacrificed himself to take away that sin, and to unite men with His Father;—would I protest against every thought of Christ, which would sever the link between Him and that which is deepest and most human in every one, who is born into the world into which He was born, who dies in the world in which He died.

I believe, brethren, that our words to you about this Indian chastisement must sound to you most idle, unmeaning words—must *be* most idle, unmeaning words—unless we take this course, unless we cherish these thoughts of Christ. How can we have the face to tell men that God is punishing them for not confessing Christ, when we say in the same breath that they have no Christ to confess; that He is not the Lord and Saviour of Hindoos and Mussulmans, not the Lord and Saviour even of the English

nation, but only of certain individuals of that nation who have privileges which do not appertain to their countrymen, or to mankind? How can we blaspheme God by saying that He subjects us to heavy calamities for not doing homage to a King who is not ours; for not proclaiming a Saviour to the nations who is not theirs? Or, is it meant that we are to proclaim some God who is not the Father of men in Jesus Christ, a God who executes vengeance at his pleasure, a God who does not seek to make men holy as he is holy? Alas! what need to tell them of such a God—they acknowledge *him* already! The fear is, that they may lead our sons to acknowledge him too,—that they may be so utterly bewildered by what they have heard and by what they see; by their vague traditions of a Saviour for mankind whom yet they dare scarcely speak of as a Saviour for themselves; by instincts to belief in the native mind which they cannot account for; by the consciousness of Wrong, and the consciousness of Right, without knowing who has awakened either; by the sense of power, without being able to say whether it comes from the mere arms which they wield, or from some singular gift bestowed upon the English race; by the conviction that that power ought to be used for the repression of crime, the assertion of Righteousness; by the mighty temptation to use it recklessly for the gratification of individual passion and vengeance;—that, at last, they will bow down before

a Siva, clothing him with some holy name they have learnt in the West, but really contemplating him only as a destroyer.

Verily, brethren, Christ has been ruling over our nation—has been ruling over our empire,—whatever we may have thought of Him, or this would have happened to us long ago. Verily, He has proved His presence in that distant land, His care for Britons and Hindoos and Mussulmans, or no Christianity of ours would have been the least protection against that which it has encountered. And now He is speaking to us—not merely, as I said before, to our rulers, but to the fathers of families, to the masters of schools, to all who are to form men that shall carry the English name into other lands. He is not, I think, bidding us introduce some new scheme of education which shall prove us to be much wiser and better than our forefathers. The institutions which they have founded inspired higher thoughts of Christ than they could grasp themselves, or than we can grasp yet. They taught their children what we have sometimes in contempt called a Pagan lore. They themselves called it by a truer and more significant name,—a humane lore. They thought,—or they worked in the thought, if they were not conscious of it,—that the servants of the Son of Man should know what men have felt, done, longed for, in all times and countries the most remote from their own. They believed instinctively that the revelation of

Christ was the interpreter of the thoughts which He Himself had awakened in them; that He Himself was the satisfaction of them. Wonderful discipline for those who are to be citizens of an empire upon which the sun does not set! All we want is, that it should be connected with a still deeper and holier discipline, received in nurseries on the knees of mothers; that it should be connected with all the problems of the individual conscience; that it should expand to meet the problems of Modern History, the thoughts and speculations of the nations which modern discovery has made known; that the Bible should be treated, not as a book which stands aloof, frowning upon all these inquiries, but as *the* key to the meaning of them: and we have an armour with which we may safely send forth our young men to fight the hottest battles. Only let us teach them to think of Christ as the Author of all that is pure and true, as the enemy of all that is vile, in their own hearts and in the hearts of all of whom they read, of all with whom they shall converse; only let us teach them that their own thoughts and ours are no measure of what He is; only let us tell them that He would make them His knights, that the banner of His Cross will be over them in whatever lands they are, into whatever furnace they may be cast; only let us bid them expect, and let us expect ourselves, the hour when He shall appear in the glory of His Father, and when that glory shall fill the whole earth.

St. Luke's Day.

(NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.)

October 18, 1857.

COLOSSIANS IV. 14.

"LUKE, THE BELOVED PHYSICIAN."

THE Collect for today is grounded upon this verse. St. Luke is spoken of there as a physician of the body, and a physician of the soul. If you felt that this is a forced analogy, a sort of play upon words, it must have grated upon your ears when you heard it in a prayer. I believe that the two ideas are not brought together by any trick of the fancy; that they are actually and essentially related.

We may think of St. Luke as the writer of a Gospel, as the writer of the Acts of the Apostles; but we think of him first as the companion of St. Paul. He acquired his perfect understanding of that which he was to set down in a Gospel specially intended for the Gentiles, by preaching a Gospel to the Gentiles. He saw the Church growing, and was an instrument in making it grow, before he described its growth.

And it is in this character especially that his profession as a physician becomes interesting and important to us.

No one can imagine that St. Paul chose his associate lightly; he would have denied that, in the strict sense of the word, he could choose at all. He himself was appointed to his work; a dispensation was committed to him; it was woe to him if he did not preach the Gospel. Those who were joined with him must have the like vocation. He was to exercise the spiritual discernment that was given to him, in deciding whether they had. We know that he suffered what was probably the greatest loss and sorrow of his whole life, his separation from Barnabas, rather than be attended by one whom he judged unfit. John Mark, whom he opposed, must have had many merits; was himself, like St. Luke, if a similarity of names does not mislead us, destined to be an historian of our Lord's acts upon earth. For one disqualification, St. Paul would not endure him as a fellow-labourer; surely the man who was taken in his place must have been supposed to have special endowments for that special function.

And yet it must strike many, that this one circumstance of his being a physician—whether he was so when he undertook his mission, or became so afterwards—was a more serious objection than any temporary access of Jewish prejudice and timidity which caused Mark to return from Perga to Jerusalem,

could possibly have been. According to the common theory respecting spiritual gifts, it was of the greatest moment to the success of St. Paul's preaching, that he should prove himself capable of breaking through the laws of nature in all ways, but especially in the act of healing the sick. The great difference, we are often told, between the power of an Apostle and that of a modern missionary, is, that he could work sudden and surprising cures on the bodies of men. Now, think how it must have interfered with the impression which these acts were to make on the beholders, to have had continually by his side a man whose business was known to be that of a healer; who professed to cure men, not by breaking through the laws of the human frame, but by understanding more of those laws than his fellows. Would not you have said, "Of all persons in the world, this is the one whom an Apostle having such powers as are attributed to him,—pledged to use these powers for the recommendation of his doctrines,—would not suffer to be one of his most insignificant subordinates, far less his honoured and constant colleague?"

Possibly it was this consideration which led the inventors of legends to determine, in spite of the Apostle's express words, that St. Luke should be a painter rather than a physician. It was an ingenious compromise. They would grant that he practised some *art*—one of the ordinary human arts,—if they could but relieve him from the imputation of being in

any sense *scientific*. The hint once given, it was sure to be prolific. The early chapters of St. Luke's Gospel contain the fullest records of the Virgin Mother; why should he not have made a picture of her? Why should not that be the original of all after-pictures of her? Why should not he be the beginner of picture and image-worship in the Church? Those know little of the faculty of the fancy, as it has displayed itself in hagiologies, who would attempt to prescribe any limit to their speculations, or who should doubt that each possible guess, starting from an originally false assumption, would in process of time become a record of history, at least as closely associated with the popular conception of the Evangelist as any words which he wrote respecting the Teacher of the Gentiles, or respecting our Lord Himself.

But we, who have learnt to attach more importance to the words of Scripture than even to the most elaborate and best attested traditions, are bound to ask ourselves how this simple, unstudied assertion of St. Paul, occurring in the midst of greetings to friends, that St. Luke was a physician, accords with the notions which we Protestants, no less than Romanists, attach to an inspired Preacher and Evangelist of the first age. If we cannot reconcile these presumptions with direct statements and with the general tenure of the Apostolic History, must they not be abandoned? If we should be compelled to abandon them, will it be a loss to our faith? May not our faith be much

deepened if we should find that it stands in no opposition to science, but, from the beginning, in an intimate necessary alliance with science? Will our hope of the spread of the Gospel in our days be weakened? May we not discover that some of the hindrances which we have imagined to its diffusion are hindrances which we have created; that none of the mighty helps which God vouchsafed to His servants and heralds in the primitive times have been withdrawn from us? May we not thus be led to a profitable humiliation for our own faithlessness and feebleness; to an acknowledgment that it is not God who straitens us, but that we have resisted His designs of love to us and to mankind?

I. I have observed to you more than once, that the wonderful powers which are described in the Acts of the Apostles as gifts of the Holy Spirit, are said to have been exercised in places where enchanters had been busy; very commonly, indeed, for the express purpose of confounding enchanters. This is a characteristic circumstance in the Biblical narratives, which no thoughtful or conscientious student can venture to overlook. I say in the *Biblical* narratives, for this is one of the points in which the relation between the records of the Old and the New Testament is most conspicuous. The rod of Moses is stretched over the river and over the air, to be a witness of the Lord God, the Deliverer of Captives, against the magicians who are practising tricks to confirm the tyranny of

the Pharaohs. Elijah forbids the rain and raises the dead, because he is engaged in a warfare with the ministers of Baal, the servants of a cruel superstition which enslaved their minds and bodies to all the capricious influences of the outward world, to the worse caprices of a priest-ridden King and Queen. The Roman Empire, in the days of Claudius and Nero, swarms with the workers of miracles. Among them are found Jews, like Elymas and, probably, Simon, who bring the knowledge which they have derived from the Scriptures to aid in practising frauds upon the people. At Philippi, at Ephesus, magicians are driving a most successful trade. The rich are interested in it. The Government protects it. The old worship is shaken by the scepticism which the Greek teachers have spread through all the cities. These miracle-workers uphold it, or at least keep alive the dread of something mightier than man —something which may do him mischief,—far more effectually than the regular priests. Fear and curiosity gather about them. The materialists laugh at them in vain; the sense of the invisible in the hearts of human beings will not yield to any ridicule. Often the scoffer goes in secret to consult the prognosticator—to seek aid of the diviner. He has no certainty for anything. Why may not these arts be tried as well as any others? Why not trust lies about the demons just as well as the lies that pass current in ordinary society?

St. Paul had no doubt that these workers of miracles were in communion with a *Spirit* of Falsehood, the self-same spirit who prompted the falsehood of the tradesman, the politician, the state-augur. He had no doubt therefore that one part of the convictions which brought men to the feet of these spiritual gamblers, was true. He did not come to Philippi and Ephesus with the message that our world and the unseen world are severed from each other; that a thick veil is between them which cannot be rent asunder. On the contrary, the tidings he brought were, that the veil *had* been rent asunder; that the Son of God, by His death in our nature, had consecrated a new and living way between earth and heaven. "And the witness," he said, "of this union, the blessed fruit of it, is, that the Spirit of Him Who smote in pieces the tyranny of Pharaoh, and triumphed over the gods of Jezebel, is come to dwell among men; to set them free from their bondage to spirits of sea, or earth, or air; to claim them as the children of the Righteous and True Being,—the Father of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. That Spirit dwelt in Him Who went about doing good, delivering the souls and bodies of men from plagues and torments—from the power of the Unclean Spirit. According to the promise which He made before He ascended, what He did, He enables us to do also. We go forth in His Name *preaching* Redemption, *manifesting* Redemption; showing that men are not

the slaves of those powers to whom the magicians would make them slaves, that they have a Father and a Deliverer, that the Spirit of Power is emphatically the Spirit of *Truth*."

II. You will see that I am not twisting the language of the New Testament. I am quoting it literally, and illustrating one portion of it by another. But is it inconsistent with *this* language, that Luke the Physician should be the chosen companion of Paul the Apostle? Would it interfere at all with *this* testimony, that he should be attended by a man whose function was to heal? Was it necessary for *this* object, that St. Paul's acts should be supposed to be subversive of the Divine order, worked in defiance of science; not illustrations of the Divine order, proofs that we are under a righteous, not under a capricious Ruler, confutations of those who were subjecting the world to chance, to tyranny, to lying? Was not the deliberate selection of Luke by one who felt that it was the most awful, responsible duty which could devolve upon him, to select a companion for such a work—that if he departed a hair's-breadth from the Divine indications, to please any friend, to gratify any instinct of his own, he was committing a sin; was not this selection the most significant method of declaring to the world, "I do not come among you as an enchanter, sporting with laws, performing cures on human bodies by some legerdemain which may make you wonder at me and think I am

some great one. I come in the name of the God of Truth, in the name of Jesus Christ, the true witness, in the name of the Spirit of Truth, to vindicate immutable laws; to draw contempt on all who would set up their own miserable wit, or skill, or their own wicked inspirations, in opposition to them. I come to claim all *true* powers of healing, all honest studies, now and to the end of time, as the gifts of God's Spirit, as the rightful and intended instruments in proclaiming God's kingdom over men."

III. On St. Luke's day I have a right to ask that this clear indication of St. Paul's mind,—of his doctrine respecting the gifts which were committed to him,—should be thoughtfully and earnestly pondered. For is it not true that St. Paul has been considered, is considered, by many who profess to regard him with the profoundest reverence, not as the foe of magicians, but as only a superior magician, working in another name and recommending another religion? You will admit, perhaps, that there are persons to whom this charge applies; that the miracle-workers in the Middle Ages; that the bishops and priests who, in our days, commend the vision of the Lady of Salette to the faith of their flocks, must hold the most exalted saint and the most perfect juggler to be exactly alike. But I do not dwell on *such* cases; I would only make one remark in reference to them. They are put forward as a trial of men's faith. I think that they serve that end admirably.

Any persons who do *not* believe that the Spirit of Truth has been given to men and dwells with men, to guide their consciences and reasons into truth and away from fictions—those persons who from any reason reject this part of Christian doctrine as fanatical or impossible—may, I think, be brought in due time, if not at once, to accept these stories, ancient and modern,—to accept also the general rule which has been so manfully propounded, that the merit of faith increases in the exact ratio that the external evidence for that which is to be believed diminishes. Any one who confesses such a Spirit of Truth as his abiding Preserver, will hate these stories most for their own sake, more for the withering Atheism which is involved in the apologies for them.

My object however is, not to flatter our self-love by the condemnation of men with whom we are at variance, but to consider whether the habit of mind which takes one form in them does not take another scarcely less mischievous form among ourselves. What means the complaint, that we have no power of recommending the Gospel to nations which have not yet received it by the gifts which wrought conviction in the hands of St. Paul and St. Luke? Do we not think in our hearts that those gifts were *not* spiritual gifts, as St. Paul said they were,—*not* gifts which testify of an invisible agency proceeding from Him Who gave laws to the sea that it should not pass; Who revealed Himself to the Israelites as their Lawgiver; Who sent

His Son to fulfil His law and make it honourable,—but magical gifts, the truth of which consisted in the impression which they produced on the senses; which proved certain men to have a peculiar power and holiness, whereby they were able to violate laws, and so to outrage the name from which St. Peter declared that all health and life proceeded? If we did think that these gifts were spiritual and not magical at the first, what should hinder us from thinking that every cure effected without the aid of enchantment or quackery, but wisely, honestly, scientifically, is a proof that the Spirit of God is at work, now as then; is guiding the mind of the Physician out of darkness into light, out of falsehood to truth, now as then; is using him to bear witness of His gracious, health-giving, health-restoring purposes towards the sons of men? Is not the abandonment of such a belief by us clergymen a practical denial of the special lesson which the apostolical signs were to teach us, a determination not to own Him as a King in the highest, noblest region of His dominion, over the thoughts, judgments, energies of the human spirit? But whether we persist in this rebellion or not, physicians, I trust, will discern the necessity of asserting that for themselves which we have ignorantly or proudly refused them. I do not see how they can maintain their ground in the great battle which they have to fight with superstition and trickery; how they can vindicate the right and the duty of discarding every theory of their own or of other men, however

sanctioned by prescription or anything which interferes with the acknowledgment of facts and the steadfast investigation of their significance; how they can pass by the temptations which will be perpetually presented to them, of making their own conceits the measure of what is true in their studies, their own wills the supreme authority in their practice; how they can keep the highest ends before them amidst the continual motives to pursue lower ends, unless they confess that all gifts of insight into the condition of their fellow-men, all powers of ministering to them, are gifts of a Spirit of Truth Who watches over them at every moment, and can make them in the truest sense His agents and witnesses.

IV. In all I have said, I have wished to keep the thought prominently before you, that Luke the beloved Physician was a missionary as much as St. Paul himself. I have hailed the return of this day in the midst of our Indian troubles, because I believe it points out to us one of the most useful, one of the most obvious solutions of some of the difficulties by which the subject of Christianizing that part of our Empire is beset. You go into a land where the religion occupies every corner of life. Can you suppose you can prevail by preaching a doctrine? You go into a land which is possessed by all manner of charms and enchantments. Can you suppose that the mere announcement that you in the West have a religion in which there are no charms and enchantments, will break them?

You go into a country where malignant powers are believed to exercise a malignant influence over the bodies of men; and can you suppose that they who are actually suffering and groaning will listen to you and come to you, merely because you speak certain words, without showing that there is any power in them to remove those influences? You maintain, that when Christ's gospel was preached in the world, 1800 years ago, to the worshipers of idols, those who preached it did reverse the wand of the enchanter; did heal sicknesses; did declare that they came as messengers of a God of health, Who cared that men should be set free from the plagues by which they are bound. You know from experience that the most inveterate prejudices of the Hindoos have given way before the proclamation of certain physical laws, because they had proofs that the observance of those physical laws leads, in a number of cases, to the removal of disease and pestilence. This has been a kind of interference with old superstitions which governments are not able to prevent—nay, in which they take part,—though, standing alone, it does threaten all that is good, all that may be restraining in these superstitions, as well as that which is evil and hateful.

Why could not the word and the act be joined? Why could not the missionary declare that the God of Whom he bears witness, is the God Who sent His Son to redeem the bodies as well as the souls of

men, to take their nature that He might bear their infirmities and hold conflict with their enemies? Why could he not say, "We come in His name to defy the enchantment of evil men and evil spirits; we come to you as messengers of health; we come to you bringing the sign and pledge that health is possible for you, that health is intended for you?" No doubt the cures would be imperfect, temporary, followed in a few years by death. So was it with those of the Apostles. And the imperfection helped instead of marring their message. They were sent to preach, not escape from death, but a Resurrection from it. They themselves bore about in their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus; they themselves were glad to depart and be with Him. But their message throughout was a message of restoration, a message of life.

I have asked, Why must we put asunder things which God has joined together? I might have asked, Has it been possible to separate them? Has not the missionary, just because he preached of salvation—just because he opened the New Testament, which spoke of Christ's cures of the sick—been obliged to recognize the connection? Have not the converts he has made felt it? Has not even the surrounding population of Hindoos and Mussulmans felt it? What hinders, then, the same hearty co-operation of the teacher of the gospel with the healer of the sick man, as in the early days of the Church? I answer, Our faithlessness at home; our low thoughts of God's

goodwill to mankind; our determination to separate the redemption of the soul from the redemption of the body; above all, our refusal to connect the discovery of truth in any direction with the gift of a Spirit of Truth. If we habitually thought of God in the way the Bible teaches us to think of Him, as the God of deliverance and salvation; if we believed that He is, and was, and is to come; that He is unchanged in that Will and Purpose which Christ revealed; if we took the acts of Christ on earth as the simplest, most decisive witnesses that that unchangeable Will and Purpose concerns the whole man; if we studied, with open eyes, the whole history of the Apostle Paul, as bearing upon that passage of it which I have considered today, we could not hesitate to believe that the promise of the day of Pentecost has been fulfilled in every new light that has been thrown on the laws of language, the relation of languages to each other, their mysterious connection with the life and being of man; in the patient efforts of every physical student; in the discoveries that have rewarded them; in the power of benefiting human beings, which accompanies that knowledge. Till we believe this, we shall be in continual danger, on the one hand, of regarding the acts of God as capricious, of supposing that He makes Himself manifest chiefly in the contradiction or supersession of His own laws; on the other hand, of turning science into a kind of abstract divinity, the ground of a new superstition.

But when we do heartily and inwardly accept this faith; when it warms our hearts as well as enlightens our understanding; when we keep it alive by doing the works which God has prepared for us, what a new day will dawn upon our land and upon its most distant possessions! There is something too dazzling for our eyes in the brightness of it, even when it is seen afar off: perhaps we shall be wiser to think how we may hasten it, than to dwell upon its splendours, which God will let us behold or not, as He knows to be best. But this I will say, that there are signs, and cheering signs, that such a day may be approaching. In every department of science and of art there are, I trust, men who have a sense of the awfulness of the powers which have been committed to them; a still deeper sense of the awfulness of truth. In this day and in our country the enemy of science would take little by his experiment of converting St. Luke from a physician into a painter. Our artists would turn upon him and say, If he was that and also a righteous man, he must have been a man of science; he must have sought the truth in the forms of Nature, truths in the human countenance, —in the Virgin's, or any other. He must have been a protester on behalf of that which is, against everything that is counterfeit, that is idolatrous. Many a one, I believe, will be ready to add, He must have claimed his gift of painting as a gift from the Spirit of Truth—we must claim ours; or he must have

abused it—we must abuse it—to the injury instead of the blessing of mankind. More and more firmly, brethren, may we all—clergymen, lawyers, physicians, artists—lay hold on that conviction; more and more steadily may we act upon it! Even the direst, the most overwhelming sorrows, which lead the citizens of our land to feel that each of them has a gift from God, that it must be submitted to His guidance, that it must be used for His glory and for the good of His children, will prove blessings for which Englishmen may give thanks from generation to generation.

Twentieth Sunday after Trinity.

October 25, 1857.

MATTHEW VII. 13, 14.

"ENTER YE IN AT THE STRAIT GATE: FOR WIDE IS THE GATE, AND BROAD IS THE WAY, THAT LEADETH TO DESTRUCTION, AND MANY THERE BE WHICH GO IN THEREAT: BECAUSE STRAIT IS THE GATE, AND NARROW IS THE WAY, WHICH LEADETH UNTO LIFE, AND FEW THERE BE THAT FIND IT."

ARE not these words conclusive against the doctrine which I have said lately that we should preach to Christians, to Hindoos, to Mussulmans, to all people whatsoever? A Gospel that God is the Father of all in Jesus Christ, Who is the head of every man; a Gospel that all gifts with which men are endowed are gifts of the Holy Spirit, and are signs of His presence,—must not such a Gospel open that wide gate which we are told here leadeth to destruction? Must it not hinder those who preach it and those who hear it from seeking to enter through the strait gate, to walk in the narrow way which leadeth to life? How can we proclaim that as a blessing to all which we are told is found only by a few?

These questions are very serious; no one who

considers his own responsibilities as a teacher or as a learner must shrink from them. No one of us, I think, can safely say that they are questions which do not concern him; that he has no temptation to overlook this text or to evade the force of it. I feel the temptation strongly: the words are sharp—sharper than a two-edged sword; they strike some of the habits and tendencies which belong to our age, which accord with our individual tastes and temperaments. It would be very pleasant to our slothful nature if we could persuade ourselves that the choice of Hercules is not to be the choice of the Christian youth; that endurance was the characteristic of Greek heroism, but may be exchanged for silken dalliance by those who are signed with the sign of the Cross; that every physical student must be on his guard against idols on the right-hand and on the left,—idols of the market-place, idols of the cave,—must steer his narrow course through them both if he would reach the port to which he is bound, but that the seeker after Him who made the world has no discomforts or perils besetting his journey, no fear of not reaching his home. Such an opinion, I say, would be agreeable enough to the indolence that lies so near all human hearts; but just in proportion as it has this recommendation, would it be offensive to all that is earnest, vigorous, hopeful, in those same hearts. If the faith of Christ asserted *this* claim to our sympathy, every sufferer, every earnest wrestler would say,—would

have a right to say,—"It is not for me; I do not want it." I am quite convinced, therefore, that we ought to search out the meaning—the whole meaning—of this sentence; that to explain away any part of it is a proof of cowardice and dishonesty; that if it should clash with any of the notions which we have cherished most fondly, we are bound to cast them off.

How then may we best arrive at the discovery of that meaning—that whole meaning—of the text, which is so needful for us? I know but one method. The gate through which our Lord Jesus Christ Himself passed must be the strait gate through which He would have us pass. The way in which He walked must be the narrow way in which He would have us walk. The issue to which this gate, this path, led Him must be the Life which He would have us seek. And by this strait gate and this narrow way of His we may be able to learn what is the wide gate through which so many pass, what is this broad way which so many choose. By the Life to which this path is leading, we must understand what the destruction is which is the goal of theirs.

I. Open what page you will in any of the four Evangelists,—let the passage you choose contain one of our Lord's formal discourses or a mere casual sentence, let the crisis be that of the Temptation, of the Transfiguration or Passion, or of the Resurrection,—these characteristics will certainly force themselves upon your notice. You are reading of One Who claims

to be the Son of God; you are reading of One who, because He claims to be the Son of God, abjures all independence, all separate authority. He is one with the Father, therefore He can do nothing of Himself. He will not make the stones bread; that would be a denial of his Sonship. He gives bread to the multitude, for it is His Father's will that He should give it. He is doing what He has seen the Father doing. His countenance becomes changed, for the Father's brightness shines through it. He is alone, and yet not alone, for the Father is with Him. The agony of the Cross is the sense of separation from the Father. Into the Father's hand He commends His spirit. Mary Magdalene is to tell His disciples that He is about to ascend to His Father and their Father, to His God and their God.

The highest assumption which it is possible for one clothed in human flesh to make,—an assumption which sounded to his Jewish hearers as the most frightful blasphemy,—was then the foundation of a deep, an entire self-abandonment, which no one clothed in human flesh had ever approached. Through this strait gate of absolute, unreserved confidence in the Eternal God as a Father, when the evidence of events, the denials of men, the anguish of His spirit contradicted the faith that He was a Son at all,—through this strait gate of absolute denial of His right to have anything and be anything apart from His Father, did He pass. If we fail to perceive

either the greatness of the pretension or the completeness of the renunciation, we fail to see Him Whom the Gospels set forth to us. If we look for any balancing of the one against the other, for any attempt to qualify boldness by humility, we fail to see Him. In the entire, the necessary union of these seeming opposites, consists the simplicity and calmness of the life. Take away either, and you introduce an element of artifice, confusion, restlessness into the character. You mix with Him something of that sin into which we have fallen.

II. Again; open any of these same four Gospels where you will, and you will find that you are reading of One Who, without saying that He was a king, proved Himself to be a King over Nature and over Man. The man of Nazareth, He Who is called the carpenter's son, speaks and He is obeyed. His word has a power in it, such a power as does not dwell in the storm and the thunder. But you are also certain—every sentence of the Gospel conveys the impression—that this King of Men is distinguished from all other men, by *not* exalting Himself above the lowest of the race, by *not* looking upon the lowest or the worst as an inferior, by feeling such an intense sympathy with the lowest and the worst, as none, who shared their corruptions, had ever been able or had dared to feel. Here is a narrow path to walk in! The highest royalty, the lowest service; the greatest unlikeness to the members of the race, the most entire

identification with every one of them! One step to the right or the left, one claim of authority and dignity which lessens the sympathy, one exhibition of sympathy which takes away from the Kinghood, and the Christ is lost, His person and His work are changed altogether. And yet it would cause one a shudder, a sense of horror, to think of Him as choosing a safe path, like some Aristotelian moralist, between two extremes. Such a course was certainly not the course of Jesus. He moves on naturally, majestically, shrinking from no perils. Nearly every word He speaks, nearly every act He does, is open to misconstruction, is always misconstrued. He does not shrink from being too much a King, lest he should be accused of being the enemy of Cæsar. He does not shrink from being too much the servant of all, lest He should be called a gluttonous man, the friend of publicans and sinners. He cannot be too much of either. To be one He must be the other. He must be perfectly both.

III. Through this strait gate, along this narrow way, He was moving on to that LIFE which He had with the Father, before the worlds were. It was therefore His proper Life, His Original Life, the life of trust in a Father; the life of entire delight in the Will of which His own was the reflex. But in another sense He was moving to a new Life, the life of manhood which He had redeemed and reconciled. If the love of God could have been content with anything

less than this redemption and reconciliation, with anything less than the imparting to men the full rights and condition of Sons of God, the Word would not have been made flesh, the life on earth which the Evangelists set forth to us would not have been lived. Therefore this is declared to be the goal and end of that narrow way through which He walked, the fruit of the Baptism with which He was baptized. Till this was accomplished, He could not see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

IV. The command then, "*Enter ye in through the strait gate,*" is the same command as "*Follow me.*" "I, Who open and none can shut, have opened this gate for you; in your nature I have *claimed* for you the rights of Sons of God. In your nature I have *disclaimed* for you all independence and self-sufficiency. Do not you, my sheep, choose another entrance than that which the Shepherd has chosen. For the gate through which He has gone—the gate through which He would guide you—is the gate to Life. You cannot find life if you refuse to own the Father Whom I have declared to you; you cannot have any life but the life of dependent, trusting children. Assume that state to be yours, wonderful as it is. Without this assumption you cannot be humble, you must be proud."

For, He goes on to tell them, there is a gate, there is a way, which does not lead to life, but to destruction. This gate, He says, is a wide one. It will

admit all kind of persons, the most unlike each other in their associations, habits, dispositions, apparently in the objects which they are seeking. If we have at all understood what His gate was, what the strait gate was, we shall be at no loss to interpret the wide gate.—Alas! which of us does not know it, from having gone through it?—The gate of trust in God as a Father is the one, the gate of distrust in God as an enemy is the other. And as the two gates are contrasted, so the two ways. The way of sympathy or fellowship with human beings as all sharing in the love of the same Father, as all having an inclination to wander from Him, is the one way; the way of self-exaltation, of setting ourselves up as having interests separate from those of our fellow-men, as being more favoured, more wise, more holy, than they are, is the other. How difficult it is to find the first of these ways, how readily a man falls into the second, —from whatever point he starts, whatever end he proposes to himself,—I think we might learn from our own experience. But that I may illustrate the subject more completely, I will take the classes of persons who are most strongly contrasted in the Gospels, the publicans and outcasts, the disreputable portion of Jewish society, whom Christ called to repentance, the Pharisees who were its highest religious models.

Opposite as these classes were, they had a common characteristic. Distrust of God was at the root of the indifference and recklessness of those whom their

countrymen scorned; distrust of God was at the root of the rules and practices of those whom their countrymen reverenced. A voice within him said to the extortioner, said to the adulterer, "Thou art breaking a law; the Ruler of the Universe is at war with thee." There was in him a skulking shame, the fear of exposure, the desire to escape from a Judge. He must console himself by putting such thoughts as far away as may be possible, he must eat and drink and do his best to be merry; if that end was not to be reached, then the steadfast pursuit of money, with the perpetual anxieties and dim hopes which accompany it, might perhaps make him forget the future as well as the past. Think how many with entirely different schemes of happiness, or with no schemes at all; how many oppressed with the cares of the world; how many light-hearted triflers, only caring to be without care, entered then, enter now, through this wide gate! And all who did enter it or do enter it must also go along in that broad *way* of which our Lord speaks. Distrust of God thus leads to separation from their fellow-men. Each has an object of his own; his fellows interfere, in a more or less degree, with his pursuit of it or attainment of it. What jostling there is! the broad road is yet not broad enough to prevent perpetual collisions. Yes, to each man who moves along in it, having that dread of One who may some day call him to account for his wrong-doings, for his carelessness of his neighbours, must try to make out

a special case for himself. He must prove that other men are wrong, and that he is right. He may not be perfect, but at all events he has not sunk to the level of that man, and that, and that.

You see at once how the extremes meet, what a point of resemblance there is between these irreligious men and those who say that they are righteous, and despise others. The resemblance does not begin there; it is more radical. The Pharisee makes long prayers in the Temple and at the corners of the streets, for the same reason that those whom I have just spoken of eat and drink. To forget an enemy or a tyrant, to keep out of his sight as long as may be, is the aim of the sensualist and the money-getter; to persuade a tyrant and enemy to forget him is the aim of the laborious petitioner. "Oh, God! I will make Thee all these offerings of time, of money, of wearisome, painful toil, if Thou wilt only allow me to escape from Thee, *not* to behold Thy face in Righteousness!" The Pharisee is opposed to Christ in his relations with Man, because he is at war with Him respecting his relations with God. He will not believe that God is a Father. He will not believe that God can speak to men, through a Man, a Brother. He will not believe that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins. Therefore, while Christ stoops to the level of all men, dies the death of all men, and so proves Himself the true Shepherd of the Sheep, these Pharisees only prove themselves shepherds by dividing them-

selves as much as possible from those whom they rule and guide.

That this way was leading to destruction those who walked in it, in the days when our Lord dwelt on earth, the history of the Jewish nation sufficiently proves. The habit of suspecting God, which prevailed alike in the religious and irreligious classes, led to the denial of Jesus as the Christ, led to the superstition and cruelty which reduced the worshipers of Jehovah far below the level of the idolaters around them. The self-exaltation, the suspicion of each other, which characterized the religious party most, but which might be traced in all classes and conditions of the people, was hastening the destruction of their city and polity. Those tempers which were the destruction of the social life of the nation were destroying also the individual life of every man who cherished them. All that was patriotic, humane, godly in him was dying out. What was base and selfish was becoming supreme. He had chosen the broad way, the way which it was so easy to enter. At every step he found the way growing closer and more contracted, till at last he could see nothing but frightful shadows of himself, till all ends in utter darkness.

How could men be brought out of this broad and dark road? Our Lord told publicans and sinners of a Shepherd who was seeking after His lost sheep; of a Father who allowed His child to wander in a far country, and to eat the food of swine, that He might

awaken him to thoughts of his home, that He might bring him back to His embraces. Publicans or Pharisees who received this Gospel entered through the strait gate of faith and trust, walked in the narrow way of self-renunciation, entered into the divine and universal life. The message concerning this narrow way was spoken first to His disciples, that they might preach it as a Gospel to all nations.

V. But after all that has been said of the many who choose the broad way, is there not something exceedingly discouraging in the words about the few who find this narrow way? Must they not have been discouraging to those who received their commission to preach the Gospel from Christ's own lips? Must they not discourage us in these latter days still more? The prophecy may have been saddening enough to the disciples; but could it have been as saddening as the actual experience of its truth? They found, when they went forth, that those who received their report were few in comparison of those who rejected it. Among their own countrymen, among Greeks, Romans, barbarians, it was a feeble minority which confessed God as a Father and themselves as members of His family; a vast and powerful majority which continued to regard Him as an object of distrust, which stood aloof from each other as if they had no common relationship, or only herded together because—so God had established His universe—it was impossible for any one to obtain his own ends without the

co-operation of some whom he was inclined to consider as his rivals.

This must have been a trying discovery, no doubt, to men who were to preach God's Name and God's kingdom to all tribes of the earth; but was there no discovery more trying still? Had they not to learn that they themselves, the chosen heralds of this Kingdom, had no power of finding the narrow way when they were walking along in the broad way; had no power of keeping themselves in the narrow way when they had once been brought into it? Had not God Himself led them, in spite of themselves, to trust in Him? After repeated lessons respecting the wisdom and duty of trusting Him, were they not sliding continually into distrust? Did not self-confidence continually overtake them? Were they not tempted at every moment to relapse into the Pharisaic thought that they were better than other men? When some fall had convinced them of the folly of that opinion, were they not tempted, instead of arising and going to their Father, and telling Him they had sinned against Him, to take some equally Pharisaic method of pacifying Him, and of seeking to recover the position they had lost?

Few they be that find Thy narrow way, O Lord! Are there *any* who find it? No, surely, we do not find Thee; but Thou findest us. We do not bring ourselves into the narrow and thorny way; but Thou hedgest up our paths, that it may be impossible for us

to walk in any other. Thou takest from us trust in ourselves, that we may be compelled to trust in Thee. Thou showest us that we are not better, but worse, than other men, that so we may commend all men with ourselves to Thee. So Christ's heralds learnt to speak then; this was the preparation which made them able to bear all opposition. It was this which made them fit instruments for raising a Christendom on the ground of God's Fatherhood to mankind, testified in His Son. They were sure it was God's will that all men should be saved, for they felt that it was only He who gave them the will that any should be saved.

VI. And this, I think, must be the preparation of those who, in these latter days, are to speak of Christ among the worshipers of Brahma or the disciples of the Prophet. So long as we are not going through the strait gate of simple trust in God as a Father, Whose Son has been born of a woman, that He might claim those who are born of women as God's children, and might seal them with His Spirit,—so long as we are not walking in the narrow way of denying that we have anything of our own, that we are better in any one respect than other men,—so long, I believe, our message to the nations of the earth, if we have strength to utter it at all, must be a powerless message, not a message of life. The mere announcement that the path to heaven is a difficult and thorny one, that there are few who find it, is no new announce-

ment to Hindoo or Mussulman. It is a staple article in the creed of both. Every torture by which devotees hope to bring themselves into union with the Divine Nature, every sacrifice for propitiating evil powers, testifies how it has blended with the philosophy and the worship of the one race. Again, that Paradise is the prize of God's warriors, of those who give themselves up for life and death to His service, is the maxim of the Koran, which has borne great fruit in the past history of those who accept *its* teaching.

Just what Hindoos need to learn is, that the Divine Nature is a nature which has been revealed to men in a Person Whom they can trust; that by trust in Him they may enter into participation of His Nature; that all evil whatsoever is abhorrent to His Nature; that we may take refuge from all evil in Him. Just what they want to know is, that God has Himself made the sacrifice for men; that they have not to reconcile Him to them; that He has reconciled them to Himself. Just what the Mahometan wants to understand is, that the God Who calls for his devotion and his perpetual warfare, is not a tyrant, but a Father; not One Who is hopelessly separated from His creatures, but One Who is eternally united with them; not One Who seeks their death, but their life; Who desires His creatures, His children, to wrestle with the powers of death, to be the bearers of life.

The conviction, deeply rooted in our hearts, that we have a right to make this proclamation,—because

it is truth, and no lie,—will combine with all the strongest, most earnest convictions in the hearts to which we address ourselves, will disturb and set in fierce opposition all in them that is exclusive, selfish, hateful. It will be miserable for us if we impute this hostility to some peculiarities of their races and their faith, if we are not able to detect all the causes and principles of it in ourselves. Take the institutions which we are wont to speak of as specially Oriental, which we say make the intrusion of Western belief and civilization most hopeless. What is there in Caste which we are not familiar with; what good or evil belongs to it, which has not its counterpart among Christians, among Englishmen; which has not put itself forth as characteristically Christian, characteristically English? So far as it is an assertion of the superiority of that which is intellectual and spiritual to that which is animal, of the man who seeks the highest ends, to the man who is stooping to the ground and eating dust, it contains a truth which must not be denied or crushed. So far as it proclaims the superiority of a *set* of spiritual men to a *set* of carnal men, it is part of the Pharisaism which was found in Judæa when our Lord appeared in it, which is rampant among us at the present day. So far as it is an assertion of the intrinsic superiority of the Brahmin as priest, to the Sudra as one of the people, it is a part of the same self-exaltation of which every page of ecclesiastical history presents us with

specimens. So far as it merely implies a vaunt of the eminence and right to eminence in a particular race, let him who has never vaunted of the unrivalled, unconquerable Teutonic virtues cast the first stone at the Asiatic boaster. So far as it is a naked assertion of a necessary hereditary superiority, and of high employments as appertaining to that superiority, Englishmen have not been generally supposed to be quite incapable of comprehending such a prejudice, quite without experience of its effects. Here then, is an illustration, in the case of the most exclusive of all institutions, that the way which we rightly say is a way to destruction,—to the loss of moral life in a society and in individuals,—is a broad way, a way into which one country and one man is in danger of sliding as well as another. When we seek a deliverance from it, it must not be by preaching ourselves, but Christ Jesus our Lord; not by proclaiming that we have a moral, or political, or religious system which is not leavened with caste feelings and caste notions, but by saying that He was born, and died, and lives to make the Oriental and the Occidental, the bond and the free, one family in Him; that all true distinctions and varieties of race, country, family, individual, which God has established, will only make themselves more evident in the Unity of His body; that all separations which the pride of man has invented to rend His body asunder shall be abolished for ever.

Or look again at that doctrine which we attribute to the professors of the other more energetic, more conquering faith. A sensual Paradise! How terrible that is to Christian ears! To think of such rewards being presented to those who fight and die for God! I should be afraid of merely denouncing this tenet. If there is no blessing for the senses as well as for the spirit, for the outward man as well as the inner, I do not see what is meant by the promises of a redeemed body and a redeemed earth, which St. Paul speaks of, which cheered him in his own pilgrimage, and which he held forth as a strength and encouragement to all the persecuted Churches which he had founded. That this truth has been turned into a terrible falsehood by the selfishness with which it has been mixed,—by the believer's expectation of a special and exclusive reward which he should win by his faith and devotion; that it has become gross and base materialism, because there has been no high standard of human and divine life to which the believer could look, and in which he could forget himself; that he therefore could only measure the world to come by the things which were the chief objects of his pursuit here; that he could only realize his own salvation by consigning others to perdition,—all this the history of Islamism abundantly and painfully proves; this it shows to be the downward road which the Mahometan nations have taken, the road to the destruction of all the moral energies that once be-

longed to them. But, brethren, dare we say that that has not been a broad road, a road into which Islamites have stumbled most naturally, seeing that Christians, in the height of their profession and belief, have deviated into the same, and have walked in it? Have we not thought of the rewards of heaven as prizes for our individual faith and services, prizes that were enhanced in value by the exclusion of multitudes from them? Has it been possible for our dreams of the Paradise that is to be, not to derive their colour from our waking thoughts of the world that we see? If the pursuit of certain selfish possessions is our business here, must not the attainment of such possessions be our recompense there? Oh! surely we must leave this broad road ourselves, for it is clearly leading us down to death! Then we shall be able to tell Mahometans of a way to life, into which they may enter as well as we, because Christ, Who is the Way, Christ, Who is the Life, laid down His life for them as well as for us; because His Spirit is seeking to bring us, and them, and all men, to the Living God, the Universal Father.

All Saints' Day.

(TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.)

November 1, 1857.

REVELATION VII. 9, 10.

"AFTER THIS I BEHELD, AND, LO, A GREAT MULTITUDE, WHICH NO MAN COULD NUMBER, OF ALL NATIONS, AND KINDREDS, AND PEOPLE, AND TONGUES, STOOD BEFORE THE THRONE, AND BEFORE THE LAMB, CLOTHED WITH WHITE ROBES, AND PALMS IN THEIR HANDS; AND CRIED WITH A LOUD VOICE, SAYING, SALVATION TO OUR GOD WHICH SITTETH UPON THE THRONE, AND UNTO THE LAMB."

THE Gospel for All Saints' Day, strictly speaking, begins with this verse. But the Church has surely shown her wisdom in not separating this vision from the one which precedes it. They stand out, indeed, in direct contrast; but the contrast illustrates the meaning of each, as well as the character and object of the book in which they are found.

I do not think it is necessary to decide whether Jerusalem had already fallen, and its temple had already been burnt, when St. John was in his exile at Patmos. Let that question be settled as it may; the all-important one which lay beneath was,—What

did these events, past or to come, signify? Their signification was so awful to any one who felt that his nation had been called out from all nations to be the witness of the Living and Righteous God and of His dominion over the earth, that nothing but the words of Christ Himself could have enabled His disciples—earnest and faithful Jews as they were—to accept the most evident warnings of the Roman intention to destroy the capital and uproot the race, as manifestations of the Divine purpose. They must have expected some miraculous interference to avert, even at the last moment, the impending doom; they must have looked for some sudden resurrection of the polity with all its visible accompaniments, even after the ploughshare had gone round the holy city, and its very name had been changed. Up to the time of Hadrian at least, we know how strong the faith of the exiled people was, that God would appear in their behalf; by what desperate insurrections they defied the powers of the Empire. To an Apostle of Christ such faith was incredulity: the facts he saw were to him not the refutation of prophecies, but the confirmation of them. And yet I do not think any Jew who rejected Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God, can have felt any measure of the awe and horror at this overthrow which it will have caused to St. John. The calling of his people was not a less sacred thing in his eyes than in the eyes of the ordinary Jew, but infinitely more sacred.

It has been the fashion of some modern critics to represent St. Paul and the writer of the Apocalypse as of opposite schools; the one resolute in his opposition to Judaism, the other fanatically attached to it. But I do not know how it was possible to use much stronger language than St. Paul uses in the 10th and 11th chapters of the Epistle to the Romans on this subject. He would be willing to be accursed from Christ if he could save his nation. To it belonged the Covenants, the Law, the Promises; of it, as concerning the flesh, Christ came. It cannot be cast away. He is certain that it is not. He himself exists to prove that it is not. A seed is to survive for future germination. He can just endure the thought of the present death of the Jewish people, when he sees what life to the Gentiles is to come out of that death. But such comfort is not enough. He has a vision, dim but dazzling, of unspeakably higher treasures which will be at its restoration.

So spoke the man whom his countrymen denounced as the deadliest apostate from the faith of his ancestors. St. John, who had not St Paul's calling to be a Gentile that he might gain the Gentiles, could not certainly have regarded with less amazement the desecration and desolation of the city in which he had eaten the last supper with his Master, where he had seen Him after He was risen, where the Spirit had descended on himself and his brethren. That the nation had destroyed itself, he saw of course. But

could the wickedness of men set aside the purposes of God? Was it not the doctrine of Law and Gospel both, that He accomplishes His mighty scheme of Righteousness and Love, notwithstanding all the opposition which it encounters from the evil will? Was it not the special doctrine of the Gospel, that even the will itself might be at last brought into captivity? Could it be, that the coming of Christ to fulfil all things, and gather the ages into Himself, was to undo the whole economy of the universe, to prove that it had been abortive?

I. The answer to such terrible doubts was contained, as it seems to me, in that vision of the sealing of the tribes, before the winds of the heaven were let loose upon the earth, or the sea, or any tree, which is recorded in the first part of this chapter. If you ask me how a *vision* could ever sustain any one under the pressure of indisputable, overwhelming *facts*, I answer: Only just so far as the vision discovers the principle and meaning of the facts; only so far as it corrects the vague impressions which those facts make upon the senses; only so far as it leads the seer away from that which is transitory and accidental to that which is permanent. A vision, in Scripture language, is not a picture presented to the eye; it is a revelation to the heart and spirit of that which does not appear, but *is*. A *city* of walls and towers addresses itself to the senses,—a *polity*, the constitution of a nation, that which alone gives worth

to a city, that without which its walls and towers must crumble, must be apprehended by another organ.

To that organ this vision of the sealing of the twelve thousand of each tribe of Israel was offered. It seemed as if the twelve tribes were hopelessly dislocated, as if the last fragment of them was about to be scattered over the face of the earth. The prophet was taught that it was not so. When Jesus chose out His twelve Apostles, He pointed to this ancient and divine institution, He asserted the permanence of it. These men, and all that portion of the house of Israel which received their words, went forth as witnesses to their dispersed countrymen throughout the world, that their election had not been in vain; that the original charter, in virtue of which they were to conquer the earth and bless all the families of it, was not abrogated,—that it was to be fulfilled to the utmost. They were to declare who God is, how He has manifested Himself. They were to declare it as of old by their organization. They were to represent the tribes in their unity as constituting a nation, in their distinctness as members of different families, each encamping by the standard of the house of his fathers.

I have had occasion to show you in former discourses that this view of the nation as an imperishable substance, when all its outward accidents were changed, is in strictest accordance with the language of the ancient Prophets. They had told how branches

would be lopped from the great oak which God had planted, how all its leaves would wither, how there would be nothing left to gaze upon but a trunk stripped utterly bare; yet that what to man's eye was dead had a life in God, which in due time all would be obliged to confess.

Such words were translated for the Apostle into reality by the experiences of his time, by the divine illumination which interpreted those experiences. The baptized men who were scattered in little bodies through the cities of Greece and Asia, were not supplanting the old commonwealth of Israel, they were the continuation and expansion of it; its tasks had devolved upon them; they had higher powers, a wider sphere, than their fathers had possessed in the times of their greatest prosperity. An earthquake was shaking, was still to shake, the Jewish world and the Heathen world. Jews might think, Heathens might think, Christians might think, not that a new world was rising out of the old, but that the life of the old had been exhausted. In truth, nothing but a carcase was given to the eagles; the body survived. No one purpose of the Almighty had been disappointed, no method had been abandoned.

I do not think, my brethren, that we need the assurance and the consolation of this vision less than St. John did. We are often inclined to adopt the notion that, at a certain period, a set of opinions and habits called Judaism disappeared, and that a

set of notions and habits called Christianity took their place; and we think that by working out this notion we can satisfactorily explain the history of the Old World and of the New. Now it is unquestionably true that a miserable, jejune, inhuman, godless set of notions and habits called Judaism did exist in the country of Palestine; and that because they were miserable, jejune, inhuman, godless,—because they were a denial of all the ends for which the Jewish nation existed, they were doomed to perdition, with the holy places which had become the shrines of them. It is also true that a set of notions and habits called Christianity appeared after the destruction of Jerusalem,—that they put themselves in vehement, passionate opposition to Judaism, leading often to the persecution and massacre of Jews,—that at the same time they embodied some of the worst qualities of that which they denounced—the same inhumanity, the same ungodliness. It is needful to recollect the fate of that Judaism, because, as God's purposes do not change, there must lie in it a fearful prophecy of the fate of that Christianity. But the name which the Jew blasphemed was not his own, but God's; the order which the Jew abused was not his own, but God's. He could stumble against the rock on which he and the world stood, and be broken. He could not remove that rock, or one fragment from it. The one foundation was laid; his polity rested upon it; therefore it could expand to fill the earth;

neither he, nor any successor of his, nor the powers of Hell, could subvert it.

A great majority of the baptized body, like a great majority of the circumcised body, might fancy that it was sealed with its own seal, not God's; that it was to be a curse to the families of the earth, not a blessing. The ministers of the Church might say that the Church had nothing to do with tribes and families; that these interfered with its sublime uniformity. But such arrogance and presumption could not in any wise frustrate the design of the Most High. Families, tribes, nations, asserted their existence, however a so-called universal Church might affect to treat them as earthly, and not divine. All the mere machinery of that Church, its schemes to make itself a name, to build for itself a tower which should be high and reach to Heaven, have been mocked and set at nought. Its efforts to create a unity, or even to maintain a unity which God had created, have been as much baffled and confounded as the unity of the Jewish tribes was by the separation under Jeroboam. Its efforts to make itself independent have been as much set at nought as the Jewish independence was set at nought by Chaldean, Persian, Roman conquests. And yet the different tribes, Greek, Latin, Gothic, Celtic, have still borne the Divine Seal upon them; and out of those tribes have still gone forth those who believed that they had this seal, and that it obliged them to bear witness of a Kingdom

of which a Divine King and High-priest is the centre, of a universal family of which His Father is the Father, of a unity which the separations of time, place, death, cannot break, whereof the Holy Spirit is the Author.

II. It is at this point that the first vision of St. John passes into the second. He has been comforted under the despairing feelings which the sight of the falling commonwealth, long as he had been prepared for that sight, must have caused him. He has acquired a sense, such as he could hardly have possessed before, though he was the beloved disciple of Christ, and had grown old under His teaching and discipline, of the permanence and harmony of the Divine dispensations. And so he was ready for an other and more wonderful revelation, very different indeed from that which had introduced it; mixed with no thoughts of Reuben, or Simeon, or Levi, or Joseph; but yet which, without that vision, would have been brilliant and fantastic rather than substantial. *After this I looked, and lo! a multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues.*

Last week I spoke of the way in which the words of our Lord, concerning the strait gate and the few who found it, were verified in the experience of his Apostles. St. John had evidence all around him of the insignificance of the bodies in Ephesus, Sardis, Smyrna, Laodicea, which confessed the faith of Christ,

in comparison with the worshipers in the Synagogues or in Greek temples who denied Him. What a spectacle then was this, to burst upon him! A multitude that no man could number! Not composed, as we might have supposed, of Patriarchs, Lawgivers, Prophets, who had believed the promises, and waited for their accomplishment. They speak all languages; they belong to all races! Well might the thought rise in the mind of the Galilean fisherman—well might he assure himself that the thought was awakened by a Divine messenger—"*Who are these, and whence came they?*" There was a time when he would have felt much as St. Peter felt, when the sheet that was full of four-footed beasts and creeping things was let down before him. The sight of aliens from the commonwealth of Israel about the throne of God, with palms in their hands, would have tempted him to exclaim—"Not so, Lord!" Even now the sight is overpowering. He can only answer the Angel, "*Sir, thou knowest.*" But that answer comes from the humility and wonder of joy. The vision seems to be too good and bright for reality. And yet the truth which St. John has been learning for years himself—which he has been banished for imparting to others—is precisely the truth which this vision embodies. "I was in Patmos," he says, "*for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.*" He had spoken of a Word before all worlds, Whose life was the Light of men. He had said that Jesus

Christ was that Word made flesh; that He was the Prince of all the kings of the earth; that He had been dead and was alive; that He had the keys of death and of hell.

If this dangerous proclamation was not a dream, but the explanation of God's universe, could it be strange that He should be bringing multitudes from the East and West, from the North and South, to sit down with Abraham and Isaac in His kingdom; that He should be gathering a family out of all nations? Unlike as a multitude so vast, so united, was to the little scattered flocks the Apostle had known on earth,—unlike as it might be to anything that could be seen on earth in the ages to come,—the Apostle could not doubt that in it was the consummation of all that the best men, the best societies on earth, were striving to be. Unless there were such a body as this, the hopes of all past generations had been disappointed, the promise of the day of Pentecost had been broken.

I said that we should learn much of the purpose of this whole book,—which has had so vast an influence upon the thought, the art, the language of eighteen centuries, and yet which men are often induced to put aside as a mere collection of riddles that can never be solved,—if we connect the vision on earth, the vision of the sealed tribes, with the vision in Heaven; with the vision—so the Church represents it—of All Saints. For the whole book has been an

enigma, and must for ever remain an enigma to men, if the primary principle of it is forgotten or rejected, that Christ's death and Resurrection have broken down the barrier between the seen and the unseen world; that He is the Centre of both. This belief has been too awful and too good for men to cherish; they have put it away from them; sometimes they have wished it might not be true; sometimes they have said nothing so blessed could be true.

They have paid the penalty of this incredulity. The conviction that there must be a communion between them and those whom they have lost, between them and the ages that are past, was one of which they could not rid themselves. Therefore they have been haunted with dark terrors and ghastly apparitions; they have been at the mercy of every impostor. Each place and race has coloured its superstitions with its own physical circumstances and temperament. Civilized ages, observing this fact, have concluded that the superstition itself had no ground but these circumstances and temperaments. They have thought they could throw it off; it has re-appeared dressed in their livery, assuming the airs of science. Christendom, which by its name and by all its solemnest ceremonies testifies its faith in One Who has overcome the sharpness of death and opened the kingdom of heaven, has organized a system of priestcraft, to establish by its prayers and its curses a temporary, occasional relation between those who are walking in

the light of the sun and stars, and the region which has God and the Lamb for its light; and the region of outer darkness. Our consciences all the while tell us that we cannot, in any acts we do, in any thoughts we think, put ourselves out of communion with the one or the other of these worlds; that if we did, the sun and the stars would not be more to us than they are to the cattle on which they shine, as brightly as upon human beings. Shall we be always the sport of necromancers and conjurors, of those who traffic with the fears and hopes of men? Shall we not dare to ask ourselves whether no illumination has fallen from above on those hieroglyphics, which we are trying to decipher by pale glimmerings from beneath?

III. The proof that the light in the Apocalypse is from above, lies, I think,—as the proof that establishes every scientific discovery lies—in the number of confused notions which it scatters; in the confirmation which it supplies to the anticipations and hopes that are the strongest in us, and the most precious to us; in the aid which we derive from it for our highest and our commonest duties.

1. There is nothing which is so distressing to an earnest man as the thought which sometimes rises in his own mind, which sometimes is presented to him as if it were a doctrine of Holy Writ by divines, that here we are bound together in families and nations; that after death all such relations cease; that all becomes individual and solitary. I have

heard such a statement from the pulpit uttered as if it were an undoubted tenet, which every orthodox man was bound to receive, which might be assumed without even being proved. I cannot conceive any one so utterly revolting to the conscience, so distinctly affirming that future blessedness is not the perfection of the present, but the utter undoing of all which has been blessed here. To escape from solitude and individualism, to be made capable of friendship and society, this has been the gift God has conferred upon us below. Families, nations, Churches, have been His; our sins have been the dissolution of them, violent efforts to rend them asunder. Then it would seem His work has failed, ours has triumphed. Society is at an end. Selfishness is all in all.

If St. John's teaching is true, this teaching is false. The multitude that no man can number is a Society. Their robes have become white, because every stain of selfishness has been washed from them by the blood of the Lamb. Their palms show that they have gotten the victory over those causes which have destroyed the unity of kindreds and nations here. There is no dull uniformity, no single tongue: but all is harmonious amidst diversity. Here, some have glorified Power, to the destruction of Meekness; some have pretended that Meekness is incompatible with Strength. There, all give glory to Him that sitteth on the throne, *and* to the Lamb. Here, men who are

sealed in the Name of God have thought that they glorified that Name most by declaring His damnation of His enemies or theirs. In that company, the one word which is connected with the Divine Name is Salvation; salvation from the curse that men have made for themselves.

2. The sight of this multitude from *every* nation and kindred must have been a lesson to the Missionary of that day, may be a lesson to the Missionary of this, tending to abate his pride, but also—why do I say *but*, why not *therefore?*—his despair. He sometimes tries to console himself with thoughts of God's mercy to those who are ignorant, and have had no means of knowing better. But then he sees that the heathens among whom he goes are actually brutalized and corrupted; no tolerance of their religion can make that fact less appalling to him. And then, when he thinks how few can ever hear his preaching, how few can understand the sounds he utters, he begins to doubt if God has not deserted His Own world. But it is not so. His converts may be few. He may have little power of making himself intelligible. But He of whom the Missionary speaks, He Who has sent him, has His ways of making Himself intelligible, has His ways of bringing people of every nation, and tongue, and clime, through much tribulation, to a knowledge of the Lord Who died for them and is ever with them, to a knowledge of His Father and their Father. They are not saved

each by the sect he professeth. They are saved by the one Name which is given under Heaven. But it does not depend upon our lips or our wisdom, thanks be to God! how they shall become acquainted with that Name. If the letters of it do reach them through us, it is another than we who has shown them what it means. Surely He can show it them, though we stammer ever so much in the utterance of it, though we do not utter it at all.

3. I am aware how easily a captious bystander, knowing nothing of the real anguish of a missionary, or of his real inspiration, may turn what I have said into an argument why he may be indifferent to the work, seeing it will be performed without him. He may be tempted to indolence by that or any argument; the devil has a multitude of arguments, of which, I am sure, that of the hopelessness of the enterprise is the mightiest. I am sure the other will always be baffled by any one who counts it his highest honour to be a fellow-worker with God, who is certain that he could not convince a single soul unless God's Spirit convinced it. And if the thought should occur to him, in which, provided it is not pushed to impiety, there is truth and wisdom, that God, whose Son became man, works by men for the revelation of His own name, then I turn again to this vision of St. John, and say, Yes, by men, and why not by just men made perfect, as well as by just men in the weeds of their imperfection? Why is not this cry in which they join, of "Salvation to Him that

sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb," to be a more effective cry than that which ascends from a poor jaded, divided, body of witnesses upon earth? In hours of unutterable sorrow, voices of consolation have come to you, you knew not from whence. In times of temptation, when your souls were balancing on the edge of a precipice, some old sentence has been brought back to you from the field of sleep, some house or tree has served to pour forth strange warnings or encouragements. Why may not those whispers have been borne from those who spoke them of old to the ear, not as now to the heart? Why may not they be kindling the memories which they still share with you? Would it strike you as strange, not as most natural, that a mother should be watching over the boy, whom, when her affections were only in their first bud, before they had come to their flower in the full warmth and light of God's love, she would have died to bless? Why may not elder patriots and martyrs be echoing Christ's own words in the ears of their brothers, in lonely dungeons which no friend in the flesh can approach, at the stake when no visible smile may greet them, when God's name is used to condemn them,—"*Be faithful unto death, He will give you the crown of life.*" And why may not these same be the teachers and Evangelists of the lands for which they wept and bled below? Would anything cheer the fainting warrior of the Church on earth more than to feel that these unseen hosts were fighting with him?

Yes, the grand words of the blind poet are true:—

> "His state is kingly; thousands at His bidding speed.
> They also serve who only stand and wait."

A multitude that no man can number are proclaiming salvation to God and the Lamb. They also who lie on sick-beds, bearing witness that it is a Father who chastens them—they who die by the hands of assassins in distant lands—they also are novices, hereafter to be initiated in these toils, in these blessings. They also will at last fully do His commandment, hearkening to the voice of His words. And that commandment is, "Love all men for my sake."

4. And there is one thought more in connection with this subject which I dare not suppress. In the calendar of a great part of Christendom All Saints' Day is followed by All Souls' Day. There is good reason, perhaps, why the latter should not be remembered by us as the former is. There is closely connected with the observation of it a certain notion that we care more for the souls of our brethren who are departed than God does, that by some intercession of ours, or by the intercession of some of His Saints, His Will towards them may be changed. Whatever custom fosters this indevout and heathenish imagination must be abandoned, even if there is worth and beauty in it.

But we may recover the day and redeem it from all its dangerous associations. We may remember that the Angels of God rejoice over one sinner that repents,

because God rejoices. We may be sure that He, without whom a sparrow does not fall to the ground, does not lose sight of a soul which He has made. We may be sure therefore that all Saints care for all Souls. Their affections, their powers of sympathy and blessing, are not limited as ours are by circumstances of time and space. They are limited only by that Love of God, the height and depth and length and breadth of which they are as incapable of measuring as we are, but which flows forth to them, and in them, and through them everlastingly.

Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity.

November 8, 1857.

MATTHEW v. 48.

"BE YE THEREFORE PERFECT, EVEN AS YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN IS PERFECT."

THE people who heard the Sermon on the Mount were astonished, we are told, at the doctrine; "for He taught them as One having authority, and not as the Scribes." The words were felt to be words of a King, not of a Book. The Speaker was not spelling out the mind of God, but announcing it; He had a right to be obeyed.

Something of this impression has been transmitted to later ages. Though the words have become letters, though the letters have been stereotyped; yet men in the far West have felt as if they were standing on the brow of the old hill, and listening to Him Who opened His mouth and said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: Blessed are the meek." Those to whom the phrases of the Bible have become hard and traditional, upon whose ears they fall as habitual sounds that carry little sense, have approached this discourse with a

kind of awe. Those who have thrown off all faith in what they call the specialities of the Christian Faith, have thought they found here something common and universal, which was worthy of their honour.

One would say that these effects could not have been produced, if the discourse had not been in the highest degree simple and practical, if there were signs in it of any, even the least artifice. And yet the most popular historian of our day, or of any day—who should know what rhetoric is, if any one knows—has spoken of "those highly rhetorical passages" in this Sermon which refer to the forgiveness of injuries, and has even announced, with an almost Papal solemnity and decisiveness, that "for sixteen centuries these passages were treated by all persons as figurative;" the fancy that they have any literal force having first presented itself to George Fox, the founder of the Quakers. Such assertions, proceeding from one who represents so much of the feeling and temper of the present day, and has so large an acquaintance with the past, may well stagger us. He cannot have spoken at random. What he says must have an important meaning. And how can this meaning be reconciled with that kind of judgment respecting our Lord's language to which I have alluded—a judgment which, in some sense or other, not sixteen but eighteen centuries appear to have confirmed?

On many accounts the subject has a close and immediate interest for us. It appeared, I think, very

clearly during the last session of Parliament, that the legal and the ecclesiastical conscience in this country were at issue on a question of the deepest concern, not to lawyers and ecclesiastics, but to the domestic life of England.

There is no doubt, on either side, as to the sacredness of this domestic life. Those who proposed to constitute a new tribunal for the trial of offences connected with Marriage; those who wished to make some alterations in the rules respecting Divorce, believed that they were removing obstacles which were unfavourable to morality and family peace. Those who opposed them, feared that the change might lead to a dangerous confusion respecting the holiest obligations. So far there is an agreement as to ends. But the ones believed that ordinary legislation may deal with the subject; that cases arising concerning it, may be referred to an ordinary jurisdiction. The others affirm that it is absolutely subject to a divine law; that only courts specially framed to execute that law can take cognizance of it. Now the Sermon on the Mount contains some of the express statements which are said to preclude all such alterations in our system as have recently been attempted. The Sermon on the Mount certainly is that part of our Lord's teaching to which we must turn for our estimate of the difference between the New Testament and the Old. Some writers indeed on the ecclesiastical side, of great weight for their personal character, are inclined to de-

prive it of this authority. They suppose that it tolerates an exception which a more strictly Christian passage in St. Luke's Gospel has annulled. But this extreme doctrine, no less than those to which it is opposed, opens the whole inquiry, what kind of teaching it is which the Sermon on the Mount contains, what matters it deals with; to what persons it addresses itself; whether it is a code, or something else than a code; whether its statements are to be taken in their full significance, or are to be explained away as figurative and highly rhetorical.

Other more recent, more tremendous events, compel us for a different reason to enter upon the same investigation. If these passages about forgiveness to which the historian alludes, are construed according to the notions of George Fox and his successors, they must prohibit that punishment of the Indian delinquents which the conscience of Englishmen seems to demand: they must prohibit all attempts to recover or retain our empire, which some of us feel that we can now less than ever dare to relinquish. But is not this mode of construing the words of Christ the only strict and literal one? If that is abandoned, must not the whole discourse lose its worth and its force, as an utterance of the Divine Mind and Will? Can we speak of it any more as containing the ethics of the Gospel? or must not these ethics be such as we can bend to our pleasure and throw away at our pleasure?

There are tremendous issues, you will see, involved in this inquiry, from whatever point we enter upon it. Nothing less, it seems to me, than the very meaning of all relative morality, and of all positive morality, is involved in it. Have we any moral foundation to stand upon that is not figurative, not rhetorical, if our Lord's words deserve that title? That there has been a disposition through sixteen centuries, through eighteen centuries, to treat them as if they meant very little indeed, and as if that little meaning might be dispensed with in the lives of Christians, I have no doubt. That during all those same centuries there has been also a feeling that the words had the most profound, direct, awful meaning,—that human life can never be even and harmonious till it is brought into conformity with that meaning, I am also convinced. That ecclesiastics have been too strict, that Quakers have been too strict, in their interpretations of the different passages to which they have given their attention, I do not believe. I do not admit that either of them has been half strict enough, half careful enough to submit their own judgments and preconceptions to the mind of Christ, to receive Him simply as their Lawgiver and their Judge. I believe that there would not have been that conflict between the ecclesiastical and the legal conscience, either now or in the generations that are past, if ecclesiastics had been less eager to establish their theories and their jurisdiction, more resolute to acknowledge the

full gravity of our Lord's teaching on the subject of Marriage and of all human relationships, more ready to connect the Sermon on the Mount, as our Lord Himself connects it, with the elder law, which He did not come to destroy, but to fulfil. I think then that it would be seen that the legislator of modern days has a function which He does not supersede, but helps him manfully to perform; and that other and higher duties devolve upon His Church in connection with human relationships, than that of impeding it. Again, I think that, just so far as the Quaker has honestly sought to interpret the Sermon on the Mount rigorously, and to apply it to his own moral and spiritual life, he has been a benefactor to the world; and that he has set himself in opposition to the conscience of mankind, has given encouragement to many of the self-indulgent and cowardly feelings of mankind, just when he has shrunk from the full and clear and severe explanation of its maxims, just when he has interpreted it according to his own notions, and not in the light which proceeds from Him Who spoke the words, and Who alone can enable us to understand them and to obey them.

I do not purpose to speak this afternoon on either of these subjects. I reserve them for next Sunday, and the following Sunday. The text I have chosen expresses the principle which I believe goes through the whole discourse, and which governs all the specific topics that are treated in it. But that text introduces

us into the heart of the difficulties which are supposed to put it at a distance from the ordinary life and practice of men. If we are anywhere in the region of rhetoric, it is surely here. The command to be "perfect"—to whom can that be addressed but to some transcendent saint? The command to be perfect "as our Father in Heaven is perfect"—must not that be intended to make even the transcendent saint despair?

I. I think, my brethren, that the command to be "perfect" must cause despair to the man who has been aspiring to be a transcendent saint; who has fancied that he is not as other men are. What our Lord tells His disciples in this sermon is, that their righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. They were men of this class: they had raised themselves above the level of their fellows; from the heights which they had reached they did look down with lofty pity upon the crowd that they could just see at an immeasurable distance beneath. They were no doubt aiming at perfection; by this difference from others, they measured their approaches to it. He who began with saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for of them is the kingdom," was laying the axe to the root of this perfection. He was not saying, "You are much further from the top of the ladder than you have fancied." He was not saying, "You want aids to ascend which you have not found, or which you are rejecting." He was declaring,

simply and broadly, "You are on a wrong road. You are proposing to yourselves a false end. Every step in this direction does not take you nearer perfection, but further from it." He tells His disciples why it must do so. The Pharisee *does his works to be seen of men;* yes! to be seen by those very men whom he is scorning, to be admired and worshiped by those whom it is his glory to trample upon. This is the inevitable condition of such aspirants. They live for observation. The world is to see how much they are above it. Thus the question with them is more and more, not what they shall *be,* but how they shall *appear.* With this terrible motive to become mere actors—in the strictest sense of the word, hypocrites—another conspired. God Himself was necessarily regarded as One Who demands an outside apparent service. He had given a law to His people. They were not to take His name in vain, not to kill, not to commit adultery. These were common precepts; the vulgarest men must be forced by actual penalties now, or threats of penalties hereafter, to observe them. The exalted man was to practise a different—a meritorious obedience. But though different in degree, it was to be the same in kind. He was not to eat with unwashen hands; not to eat at all at certain times; not to neglect the hours of prayer. Additional obligations were laid upon him that he might be perfect,—obligations not deduced from the law, except by accident, but appended to it,—obligations

which, even if they interfered with the law according to the simple letter of it, were still to be recognized as means by which the select class might win God's favour. Our Lord dwells on one commandment which was treated with peculiar contempt by those who were aiming at peculiar holiness. It was a sign of devoutness *not* to honour the father and mother, not to contribute to the support of their weakness and age, if the money which would have been given to them was dedicated to the service of the Temple. No more characteristic sign can be found of the nature of this Pharisaic religion, of the results to which it was leading. Common duties—most of all, relative duties, those which had to do with the family—were trifled with and discarded. The holiness was altogether individual. It was to procure advantages and rewards for the individual man. And this, though in another sense it was altogether social, inasmuch as it demanded spectators, as a very great part of it would have been wasted, if there had not been bystanders to notice it and be affected by it.

To understand how entirely the perfection of which our Lord speaks was the reverse of this perfection, we must remember another quality of it, which is clearly implied in those I have spoken of already. The Pharisaical aspirant assumed evil as the ground from which he started. Evil was the condition of his race. Every step that raised him above evil, raised him above mankind. The nearer he approached to

the Being he worshiped, the further he was from those among whom that Being had placed him. Godliness and humanity were direct and deadly opposites.

Now when our Lord said to His disciples, "Be perfect," He made it evident by all the rest of His discourse that He meant, "Be men. You cannot by any possibility be anything better than that which you are created to be. You must make yourselves worse by becoming anything else than that." Those to whom He said the Kingdom of Heaven belonged, were those who did not lift themselves above their fellows,—the meek, the merciful. Those who should obtain consolation were precisely those who were suffering as ordinary men suffer, who were suffering with them. Those were not rewarded who had righteousness, but who were hungering and thirsting after it, and would find the attainment of it their reward. Not those whom the world looked upon, but those whom no eye but God could see, the pure in heart, were to have that which they coveted, to see Him as He saw them. Not those whom men thought well of, but those whom they thought ill of, whose names they cast out as evil, might claim fellowship with the prophets of old. All therefore in this perfection is social, not, like the Pharisaic, individual. And yet all is out of sight, not, like the Pharisaic perfection, apparent, cognizable by the eye.

Look again how this difference affects the relation of this Gospel of perfection to the Law which had been

given in the old time. Evidently the difference is in kind and not in degree. It is not that a new code is appended to the old code. It is not that there is a code for a class of men which is different from the code for men generally. It is that the Gospel commandment belongs to the man himself, that the legal precept belongs to the acts of the man. It is therefore that the Gospel perfects, completes, fulfils the Law, without destroying one jot or tittle of it. Each stands out in its own distinctness. Each sustains and is necessary to the other. They do not clash, for they belong to different regions. They must be continually acting and re-acting upon each other; the weakness of the one must be the weakness of the other; the strength of the one must be the strength of the other; because both equally apply to the same man, to the same human race. The Lawgiver, Who deals with acts, says, "*Thou shalt not kill;*" the King, Who speaks to the minds of His subjects, says, "*Thou shalt not be angry with thy brother without a cause.*" The Lawgiver, Who deals with acts, says, "*Thou shalt not commit adultery.*" The King, Who speaks to the heart, says, "*Thou shalt not look upon a woman to lust after her.*" The Lawgiver says, "*Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths;*" so announcing that every overt act of perjury will be avenged by the all-seeing Ruler. The King over the Spirit says, "*Swear not at all, for heaven is God's throne, earth is His footstool, Jerusalem is His city, the hairs of*

your head cannot be white or black without Him;" so guarding the continual hourly reverence of Him in Whom we live and move and have our being, by the loss of which, through carelessness and profaneness in ordinary conversation, the solemn oath or asseveration becomes of little worth or obligation.

With what especial force this general doctrine applies to that honouring of fathers and mothers, which the Pharisees had set at naught by their traditions, I shall endeavour to show you under the next head. What I have to remark further now is, that Jesus could raise the standard of human morality, in opposition to the inhuman standard which the Pharisee set up, because He was Himself the Son of Man; because He came to declare, and in His Own person to manifest, the truth that God and man are not divided, but eternally united; because He showed and proved that man is made in the Image of God; because therefore that which is truly human must answer to that which is truly divine; because the fall of the first man must have been a fall from trust in God, and from the belief that this was the state intended for him; because the fall of each man must consist in choosing to be a separate selfish man, to stand in his Adam-nature, in renouncing that true state of union with Christ and of fellowship with each other, into which He has redeemed us and which constitutes our perfection as members of the human race.

II. But secondly, He says, "*Be ye perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect.*" If the first clause is not fatal to all human endeavour, if it does not prescribe an absolutely impossible enterprise,—what must we say of this addition to it? What I say is, that we have in these words, "*as your Father is perfect,*" that which removes any discouragement which the other, after all explanation, might have left on our minds; that we have a maxim of ethics set before us, which differs from the maxims of ordinary moral philosophers in being compassionate, practical, hopeful; that we have here the proof that our Lord's doctrine is higher in its demands than any other, and yet that "His yoke is easy and His burthen is light."

1. A man may say, "I am quite convinced that the social, human morality is the highest morality, that this is what God seeks of us. I feel that to be a good father, a good son, a good husband, a good citizen, in the full sense of that word, may be, must be, to lead a more perfect life than to be practising the most admired religious selfishness, than to be seeking after the highest selfish rewards which religious teachers have ever spoken of. But the more I wish for this perfection, commonplace as it is said to be, the more distant it appears to be from me. God may require nothing more of me than to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before Him; but oh, how hard is doing justice! how the love of mercy vanishes when I have some personal injury to avenge!

what pride springs up in me and enslaves me, when I fancy most that I have acquired humility! The best laws, the most admirable rules of conduct, cannot make me what St. Paul says I should be, to my children, to my servants. Suppose I love those who love me; suppose I yield to impulses of affection; does not my conscience tell me that I am partial, and therefore am doing injury to those whom I fondle, as well as to those whom I treat with coldness and indifference?"

Such thoughts arise in one who is aspiring after no fantastic excellence, who is simply caring to do his duty in that state in which he finds himself. He certainly does not scorn laws, not the most vulgar earthly laws. The Ten Commandments he reverences as divine, but somehow they do not reach him; he wants help which they do not give. To act out any one relation, he must not only avoid transgression, but do right; he must not only do right, but be right. How can he be right? Our Lord tells him that he is actually, really a child, not only of an earthly parent, but of a Father in Heaven. These relationships on earth are grounded on that celestial relationship; they exist because it exists; they are formed in its likeness. The Eternal Father has constituted each family, because He has established one Universal Family in His Son. This is the state which Christ has revealed to us. The Pharisee would not honour father and mother, that he might reserve all his ho-

nour for God; therefore he could not honour God, because he did not believe in God as a Father. Jesus Christ bids us not love father or mother more than Him, because in Him dwells the only love which we can show to father and mother; because it becomes a mere selfish affection, dependent on accident or circumstance, sure to dry up, if it is not derived from His love, not constantly renewed by it. Thus then the perfection which He enjoins, the true human perfection, is possible when we submit to the Will which is governing the universe and governing in us; when we cease to kick against the pricks; when we will permit the Spirit which is proceeding at every moment from the Father and the Son to take from us the conceit, vanity, restlessness which are making us miserable.

2. But as there lies in this Name the power which may make us all that we can want to be, so there is in it also the infinite compassion and forgiveness for our failures, which we ask and ask in vain from all the doctors in the world, even those who seem most tolerant, even those who bid us content ourselves with acts and states of mind with which our consciences refuse to be content. I have a right to be like our Father in Heaven. Likeness to Him is my proper human condition. But I have also a right to go to Him and say, "Father, I have not cared to be like Thee, I have not believed that I could be like Thee, I have not confessed myself to be Thy child."

I have right to lay bare all my weakness before Him, to speak to Him as One Who knows how great it is, as One Who understands all my deflections from His ways, and cares for me more than I possibly can. "Be perfect according to this rule or that." "Yes, but may I confess to the rule? Will it understand me when I say I am sorry? Will it make me sorry?"—"Be perfect according to the standard of this holy man or that."—"Yes, but does he know what I am striving after?—Do his thoughts comprehend me? all my stupidity, all my selfishness? Can his life become mine?" "Be perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect." The wrestler who has had most falls, who has had most experience of the strength of the enemy, of his own feebleness; the man who is in deep mire where no ground is; he who is in fetters from which he only wishes to be free,—hears this message and finds in it the assurance that he may yet rise up and walk; that there is a home for him, that there is One Who will bring him to it. What anger, rage, inclination to hate, there is in him! How circumstances seem to conspire with it! What strong pleas seem to justify it! How it is banishing God from him! what a distance it is creating between Him and His child! But He in Whom is all Mercy, Forgiveness of enemies, Patience, is not afar off. He bids me be what He is! He can convert me to be what He is! Who that has had a quiet, even pious education, can tell what infinite efforts it may be costing some poor

or rich man, bred among people whose language was half made up of curses, to obey the precept "Swear not at all"? What would become of him if he might not throw himself on the pity and strength of the very Being Whose name he is tempted continually to trifle with! When he does, how much more he may know of that Being than men do whose lot has been more fortunate!

3. This text, therefore, cuts through a number of webs in which casuists have entangled the human conscience. It does so by putting an end to those tricks of the deceitful heart into which we are all falling continually. "*How oft,*" asks the Galilean,—for he was just learning the first rudiments of his faith, under the Divine Teacher,—"*How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?*" What an opening for the refinements of a Confessor or Spiritual Director! How accurately the degrees, qualities, occasions, times, objects, places of forgiveness, might be set down! What delicate distinctions, what hair-breadth evasions of difficulties! What torments to the memory and heart of the doubter, what practical indulgences to his worst inclinations! In our Lord's answer not a single subtlety. He replies by a simple parable which brings out the very meaning of our text. God forgives, thou art unlike God, therefore thou art miserable if thou dost not forgive. There is no measure or limit in the command. God's mind is the standard. Try your mind by that. Do you wish

God to be less forgiving than He is? Would you contract His forgiveness? Would you make it not a forgiveness from the heart? Then yours may be so. But in this very parable God is represented as punishing, as punishing severely. Punishment in Him is not then incompatible with the most fervent love and compassion—may be demanded by love and compassion. So be it with you. Be perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect.

On this instance of forgiveness I shall have more to say hereafter. I refer to it now as one of the most complete illustrations of the truth, that, just because there are no indulgences in the Gospel morality, just because it proposes to man only the highest standard, it lays less burden on him than any other; it is from first to last a deliverance from burdens. We are oppressed with the consciousness of something which we ought to be, of something which we cannot be. What do you gain by persuading your conscience that it has deceived you as to the extent of your obligations? Diminish them, and what remains will be just as overwhelming. Each day, as your aims become lower, your difficulty in pursuing these aims will be greater. Christ teaches us that the burden is not in the strictness of the law, but in ourselves; that a law—every law, human or divine—must be weak through the flesh; that so long as we are merely trying to obey a rule we shall find that rule a burden—be it the most moderate ever invented—that when we

claim our rights as new men, as created in Him to good works, as children of a Father in Heaven, we become united with Him from Whom laws proceed: obedience to them is recognized as reasonable, as part of our constitution; disobedience is felt to be the unnatural, miserable state; all disobedient acts to be departures from a blessed order. But for such acts, for such relapses into an unhealthy evil state, there is confession; there is the gift of repentance; there is that Divine restoration which no indulgence or toleration such as men dream of can give.

And if this morality of Christ is not casuistical morality, still less is it rhetorical morality. The rhetorician exalts virtues, as if they were characteristic of certain favoured persons whom it is his calling to praise; denounces vices, as if none could have fallen into them but those whom it is his calling to vituperate. Our Lord speaks of the highest virtues which any man has ever practised as being resemblances to the Father in Heaven, Who has made all men in His image; Who has redeemed all in Christ that they may be renewed in His image. Our Lord treats all vices which the law condemns, as vices into which it is possible for any man to fall, as lying close to every man, as being the consequences of inclinations to which no man is a stranger. The rhetorician deals in high-sounding generalities about magnanimous endurance of wrong and suffering. Christ speaks of the man who is *smitten on one cheek, turning*

the other; of the man *who is bidden to go one mile, going twain.* Homely, human illustrations, surely; precisely those which the rhetorician scorns; precisely those which we need for the business of life.

I will not anticipate what I shall have to say, if God permit, next Sunday, respecting the conflict between legal and ecclesiastical morality. But this I will say, that the more we clergymen teach children and teach grown men the doctrine of our old Catechism, that they are "members of Christ, and children of God, and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven," the more I believe we shall be fulfilling our tasks; the more we shall prove to you that the country needs some help besides that which laws and penalties can give, for the preservation of anything that is good among us, for the reformation of anything that is evil. Above all, I trust that you will come to perceive that in this teaching, illustrated by the whole history of the Old and New Testament, lies the protection of all domestic society, of the reverence for fathers, of the marriage bond. What ecclesiastics have done for these, I shall have to confess with much sorrow and shame. What the Gospel has done for them, what the Church of God—so far as it has been the witness of Christ's redemption and of our adoption to be children of His Father—has done for them, I can assert with freedom and confidence, because I can appeal to the facts of history and the conscience of mankind in support of what I say. The sacredness

of our hearths and homes we do not owe, we shall not owe, to legal enactments, to courts of justice, whatever names they may bear. We have owed them to Him Who has said, "*Be ye perfect, as my Father in Heaven is perfect,*" to Him Who has made Himself the Bridegroom and Husband of our race. We shall owe the continuance and elevation of them to the growing belief that all things in heaven and earth stand not upon some shifting sand of legal or of priestly inventions, but in Him Who was before all worlds, and Who will abide when all that has been merely the work of our hands shall be dissolved.

Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity.

November 15, 1857.

MATTHEW v. 31, 32.

"IT HATH BEEN SAID, WHOSOEVER SHALL PUT AWAY HIS WIFE, LET HIM GIVE HER A WRITING OF DIVORCEMENT: BUT I SAY UNTO YOU, THAT WHOSOEVER SHALL PUT AWAY HIS WIFE, SAVING FOR THE CAUSE OF FORNICATION, CAUSETH HER TO COMMIT ADULTERY: AND WHOSOEVER SHALL MARRY HER THAT IS DIVORCED COMMITTETH ADULTERY."

LAST week I examined a statement, made on very high authority, that the Sermon on the Mount contains a number of rhetorical passages, which cannot in their strict sense be applied to the regulation of our lives. I disputed this assertion altogether. I maintained that the very persons who were supposed to have erred through over-much rigour in construing our Lord's words, had really erred from explaining them too loosely, from overlooking hints which He had Himself given us to guide us in the understanding of them. I maintained that the application of them to our daily duties had been weakened by this laxity, that they would bear with far greater force upon our conduct if they were not controlled

and reduced by the notions of their expounders. Having spoken on those general words, which contain, I think, the principle of the whole discourse, "*Be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect,*" I proposed to consider two special inferences from our Lord's doctrines, which have been supposed to be particularly direct and obvious, and to make them impracticable:—First, the inference which has been drawn from His teaching respecting divorce, by ecclesiastics; secondly, the inference which has been drawn from His teaching respecting forgiveness, by Quakers. I begin with the former.

Every one must have observed how often the phrase, "*It hath been said of old time,*" occurs in the first division of the Sermon on the Mount. On the clear understanding of that phrase, the interpretation of it must in a great measure depend. In the text I have just read to you, and in some others, the phrase is slightly varied. The *old time* is omitted. The difference is not very important. But as I wish to be as exact as possible in treating language which has been supposed to be loose and vague, I would not pass it by. I think there may be a significance in the change. If we turn to the 19th chapter of St. Matthew, we shall find our Lord answering a question of the Pharisees, "*Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?*" with the counter-question, "*Have ye not read, that He which made them at the beginning, made them male and female, and said, For this cause*

shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?" Then he adds: "*Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*" Then, according to St. Matthew, the Pharisees rejoined, "*Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?*" In the 10th chapter of St. Mark the conversation is reported somewhat differently. There, Jesus asked the Pharisees, "*What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the Creation God made them male and female.*" Now, as it was the design of our Lord to bring out the truth that Marriage was an institution far older than the Law, not in any sense the creation of the Law, there seems a good reason why the expression "ancients" or "old time," which is applied in other cases, either to the commandments or to certain venerable maxims of Scripture, should be dispensed with here. No doubt in strictness it was as applicable to the bill of divorcement as to the commandment respecting adultery. But since it was a special object in this passage to impress the hearer with the feeling that there were older times than those which had produced either the permission or the commandment, it may have been purposely dropped

lest that impression should have been in any degree weakened.

I rest nothing upon the difference in itself. If some better reading were discovered, which contained the same words that occur in the other clauses of the discourse, I should be perfectly content with it. For the principle which I suppose this variation of phrase may have been intended to indicate, is amply established and sustained by those passages which I have quoted, and by the tenour of our Lord's discourse. We fancy that He is enacting a new law to supersede an old law. No, He is bringing out that which is older than all penal laws, all laws of tables, a primary part of the human constitution and of the Divine order. He is revealing that which is beneath all positive decrees and enactments, beneath even God's commandments themselves, that without which they would have no meaning. What would a command not to commit adultery be worth, if there were no marriage existing? How can a bond be broken which has not been formed?

The whole morality of the Pharisees, as we saw last Sunday, proceeded upon the forgetfulness of this obvious and fundamental principle. They looked upon penal laws, not as preserving obligations, but as the foundation of them. And so they made the highest and divinest laws abortive; they contradicted them in the letter as well as in the spirit. They would not look at the reason of the Sabbath-day, as it is stated ex-

pressly, formally, emphatically in the Fourth Commandment. They would not suppose that God could care for men-servants and maid-servants, that He could wish them to rest because He rested. Therefore the whole nature of the day was changed. It became not a blessing but a curse, not a day made for men but against men. Precisely on the same ground they supposed the Fifth Commandment to be the ground of the honour that was due to parents, not merely the assertion and vindication of a relation already existing —implied in the life of human beings. Therefore the honour of parents might be neglected, in order to pay honour to Him Who had given the commandment.

I dwelt upon this subject especially last Sunday, not only because there is none which shows so clearly the mind and spirit of the Pharisee, but because there is none which so clearly sets forth the mind and spirit of our Lord, which shows in what sense He was uttering an old truth that had been from the beginning, in what sense He was revealing that which had been kept secret from the foundation of the world. The fatherly relation had existed from the day that Eve brought forth her first-born; the brotherly relation, from the time that the keeper of the flocks and the tiller of the ground grew up together. The earliest book in the Bible, which has nothing to do with the burning mountain or with the laws upon tables, is mainly occupied with setting forth the relations of a single family, a family by

which all the families of the earth were to be blessed, —in setting forth these relations as grounded upon the revelation of the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. With one hand our Lord was striking at the attempt of the Pharisees to derange the course of their own history, to put that first which God had put second, to subject a constitution to mere decrees. With the other hand He was striking at the denial of the Pharisees of that higher and fuller revelation of God which holy men had lived and died expecting,—that revelation of Him as united to men, not by a formal covenant but in an actual Son,—which He was making with His words and in His acts, which He was to bring out fully in His death and in His resurrection. By basing everything upon outward law, upon a law only concerning outward acts, the Pharisee overthrew that great simple human history which is contained in the lives of the elder Patriarchs. He destroyed the sense and coherency of the prophetical books, their worth as lessons in morals and politics, the grandeur of their poetry, their warnings and their hopes, by robbing them of their leading characteristic,—that they connect all human relations with Divine, that they treat the superstitions and infidelities of the Nation as adulteries from the Lord who has married it to Himself. By basing everything upon the Nature of God and His Own eternal Sonship, Jesus restored the patriarchal records to their place in the Divine economy, proved that the pro-

phetical records were not a collection of idle figures and vain rhetoric, but direct appeals to the conscience of human beings, preparations for One Who could tell them plainly of the Father.

The Pharisees, I have said, did not merely misrepresent the Patriarchs and the Prophets; they misrepresented the statute law which they worshiped. They confounded permissions and commands. When the Legislator wisely abstained from usurping a dominion over the conscience which he could not exercise, they measured the demands of the conscience by his decrees. The prescription that a man who put away his wife must have a writing of divorcement, was to them as much a rule of life as the precept not to commit adultery. "They were both found in the book; where was the difference?" When men begin to argue thus, we may be quite sure that the two will *not* be of the same practical validity; that the permissive edict will be obeyed, that the restraining one will be forgotten. The records of this age as they are delivered by Josephus, as they are indicated by the Evangelist, make it evident that this was actually the case in Palestine. The story in the 8th chapter of St. John, whether it should be in that place or not, does not exaggerate the condition of society, even if we suppose the accusers of the woman went out one by one convicted of the very sin with which they had charged her.

On the other hand, there is not a word in our Lord's discourses, here or elsewhere, which condemns

the regulation respecting divorces: "*For the hardness of your heart,*" he says, "*he suffered you to put away your wives.*" In these words the Son and Lord over the house justifies, instead of blaming, His faithful servant. By this permission Moses confessed the necessary weakness of all mere enactments. With a clearness of insight which must have been imparted by a higher Wisdom,—it is so contrary to the natural ambition and self-sufficiency of a Legislator,—he saw what the Law cannot do. He saw that his function had respect to transgression; that it presumed hardness of heart; that he had no power to make men love their wives or respect the marriage vow. Keeping the commandment always in sight, adapting his means to the circumstances in which he found himself, because they were indications of God's purpose, he could do something to prevent outrages upon God's gracious ordinance, something to keep alive the sense of its being His ordinance. Overdoing might be just as unfavourable to the reverence which was by all means to be cherished, as neglect. The heart might be made harder, not softer, by efforts to force it and crush it. God made them male and female. God said, "Let the twain be one flesh." Moses may weaken the power of those celestial words by his earthly attempts to render them effectual. Herein I perceive the fidelity of Moses to his divine office. Herein I see how truly he was an inspired man. Herein I discover how he was intended as an

example of the modesty, also the courage, which is befitting in legislators of all times;—modesty, to understand just how much they are able in their own sphere to promote an object which is dear to them;—courage, to resolve that they will not go out of their sphere to promote it, by whatever impulses from within or threats from without they may be urged to do so.

But if our Lord does not blame the legislator, He speaks here, as everywhere, to the conscience and spirit of the man: "*I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away committeth adultery.*" No language can be more distinct. "I am speaking to you, my disciples—to you, common men; not in the least to those who make laws or execute them. I am speaking to you who are living under this Law of Moses, who can, therefore, avail yourselves of the license which that Law allows you. *I say to you, whosoever shall put away his wife.*" Our translators are strictly right, I conceive, in the first verb they have chosen; unfortunate, when they give a new rendering of the participle of the same verb. The word *divorce*, in the sense we give to it, was not applicable to the practice of the ordinary Jewish husband. He simply 'put away' or 'sent away' his wife. The Law insisted that he should obtain a certain document to authorize his act. It was little more than a registration of his procedure. The separation was, to all

intents and purposes, his doing; not the decision of any court. I make this remark, that you may feel how entirely the circumstances of the evil which our Lord was rebuking, conspire with His Own divine purpose to explain the object and direction of His words. Then follows the exception about which there has been so much debate, and which some hope to get rid of by referring to the 15th verse of the 16th chapter of St. Luke, where it does not occur. I am most anxious that you should compare those words with these. It will strike you, I think, at once, that ours are much more elaborate; that they occur in a more regular discourse; that they involve a much more careful comparison of the old time with the new. The words in St. Luke are evidently used as an illustration of another topic; they are meant to explain the assertion, that, in the Kingdom of Heaven, into which many were pressing, not a jot or tittle of the Law would be abolished. But this is common to the two passages: each speaks of the man as putting away his wife; neither deals with outward law, or with the permissions which it ought or ought not to grant; that subject is not handled, not even hinted at. The passage in St. Luke, even more obviously than that in St. Matthew, refers to the existing practice of the Jews, and to the notions of the Pharisees.

The next clause of our text illustrates, even more strikingly, the personal character of the command.

The man is treated as the guardian of his wife's life and purity. He must not put away his wife, lest he should cause her to commit adultery. This clause explains, I think, and vindicates the preceding one. If she has already been guilty of the sin, it may be right, it may be a stern duty, not of course a privilege, to treat the bond as broken; it may be right, for her sake as much as for his own, to seek a separation. Such a doctrine (it has been observed, most truly as I think, by a clergyman who has treated this subject) vindicates the sanctity of marriage far more than the one to which it is opposed.

The final clause, "Whosoever marrieth her that is put away committeth adultery," is a direct corollary from the former. If her putting away, does not in the sight of God separate her from her first husband, even though it be authorized by the earthly legislator, she is not in the sight of God married to another, even though that marriage be sanctioned by earthly law. Here again Christ is speaking directly to the conscience. A lax outward rule will not acquit it of its responsibilities; a stringent outward rule might not in the least assist it in ascertaining the limits of its responsibilities. One solemnly divorced, in our sense of the word, is declared to be not merely put away by her husband, but to be no longer his wife in the sight of God. The cases are not parallel; still less can the text, which does not condemn the Mosaic Law, pronounce what a future legislator ought or

ought not to permit to men's hardness of heart. But whatever the law be, the man stands at Christ's tribunal, and must ask Him to search his heart, and tell him what he should do or should not do. If we suppose our Lord, in this text or any other, to have set aside the Mosaic code, and to have substituted a new code for Christendom, we empty the words of all their life, of all the power they have exercised over mankind.

For these words—these few simple words—*have* exercised a mighty power over mankind, just because they are *not* corrective of an outward policy, but belong to that internal regeneration which the Son of Man came to effect for the world.

As long as the man is debating with himself what chance he has of escaping from the marriage bond into which he has entered, so long it is impossible that he can regard it with any real reverence; it is not in any true sense a *relation*, it is merely a contract secured by certain penalties. If there has been any more elevated idea of wedlock in Christendom—in England—than this, (and if there had not been, there would not have been a Christendom or an England at all; each would have had the semblance but not the substance of a social life,) it has been because Christ took marriage out of the narrow sphere of general legislation, restored its elder sanctity, invested it with a deeper sanctity by revealing His Own relation with humanity, which sustains it, and which it sets

forth. The Gospel of Marriage has done what laws respecting marriage never have done, never can do.

And so He has given the modern legislator a help in compassing his own truest ends, which the elder legislator did not possess. Moses was not merely obliged—obliged by duty and conscience—to tolerate divorces, he was also obliged to tolerate polygamy. He would have been stepping out of his place, he would have forgotten that he was a servant in the house, if he had made any endeavour to stop it, great as the temptation must often have been. He would have anticipated a stage in the world's education; he would have tried to do that by laws, which, we have the clearest demonstrations of experience, has never been effected by laws,—has always been effected gradually, if not at once, wherever the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the Son of Man, the One Head of the race, has been preached and accepted. Explain the fact as you like, that *is* the fact. Laws and punishments have never been able to undermine that which we feel to be so fatal to domestic peace, to the strength of a nation; with this proclamation it never can long co-exist. Then the legislator is able to move in the wake of a moral power which has gone before him; he can say, "This shall not be; this is a violation of a primary institute of Society, which I will avenge;" then, and not till then, he will be listened to. And in the other case the difference is not less conspicuous. The modern

legislator can take from the man all license of putting away his wife at his own pleasure. He can guarantee her rights. He can watch over her. He can claim that she shall only be divorced (not dismissed) after the solemnest proof that the contract has been violated. So mighty has been the change—produced wholly by an invisible moral force—that we scarcely know how to give the old word its proper signification. We unawares mix with it thoughts of formality and legality, which would have been alien from it in the conception of an old Jew or Roman, formalists and legalists though they both of them were.

The history of Christendom, in every period of it, bears out the conclusion which we should deduce from this one fact. Intelligent and impartial Protestant historians, who are not content with referring all the power which the Popes exerted in the Middle Ages to the superstition or wickedness of those ages, —who believe that no such power could have existed in God's world if there had not been something in the conscience of mankind which upheld it,—have asked themselves, or rather have asked the records of the past to tell them, what it was in this power which could exalt itself above the decrees of States and the force of armies? And they have been compelled to answer: "Those who were called Fathers of the Church did set forth an image, if it were ever so distorted an image, of a Fatherly Government to men. They did address themselves to that sense

of the dignity, the awfulness of relationships which there is in the minds of men. They did vindicate these as more ancient and divine, more connected with God and His dominion, than all the statutes of special kingdoms. And so, whenever they interfered to check the pride and license of monarchs, especially in reference to their marriages and the dissolution of them, there was that in the heart of Europe which defended and sustained the assumption,—which confessed it as the discovery of a higher tribunal, to redress crimes which lay beyond the control of ordinary judges,—as a voice proclaiming that the deeds done in darkness should be brought into the light of the sun."

Here was the *power* of these rulers. Where was their *weakness?* How was it that they convinced men that this power must be lodged somewhere else than with them, that they could not wield it except to the injury of that very cause which had made it tolerable, which had made it venerable? They aspired not to assert that great ordinance which was from the beginning, not to stamp each marriage with the sanction of the Church, as a sign and witness of the sacredness which it bears in the eyes of God, but to give it an artificial sanctity by their blessing, it being in itself so earthly and impure that holy men ought not to stain themselves with it, even when it had received that blessing. They pretended to make it a Sacrament; they denied that God had made it sacramental by His act

and institution. Marriage belonged to a scheme of ecclesiastical jurisprudence, not to a Divine economy. It was degraded from the high honour which God had put upon it, in order that it might be lifted again to a fictitious honour which it derived from the words of men. See whether the grossest scandals of the Middle Ages, the tricks and subterfuges by which marriages were declared to be void because they were not voidable, the deeper confusions which accompanied the clerical celibacy, had not their origin in this confusion of the Church respecting its own duties and powers. See whether its attempts to produce a rival system of jurisprudence to that of States and Civil Courts, did not arise from a secret distrust of its own power, a secret unbelief that domestic relationships were really holy in the sight of God, and had a foundation in His revelation of Himself. Precisely that Pharisaic habit of mind, which our Lord had encountered in the Sermon on the Mount, reproduced itself in His Church. Nothing was venerable and great but edicts. The New Testament meant a canon law. That canon law was to take special charge of those conjugal ties of which the ecclesiastic himself knew nothing, which it was his profession and vocation to scorn.

At length the Teutonic mind of Europe—that mind into which God had put from the first such a reverence for domestic life—declared that this could not be, that there must be a lie at the root of such tre-

mendous practical contradictions. As men read the Old Testament, and found what clear pictures of domestic as well as of national life are there, they became convinced that God had intended both for men. They were certain that the Old Testament could not be contrary to the New, that Apostles had not designed to set at naught Lawgivers and Prophets. It was the fault of the ecclesiastics if this lay insurrection on behalf of morality and of God's Word took too much of an Old Testament direction. It was their fault if in some countries which partook of the blessings of the Reformation, many of the imperfect notions of the Old Testament respecting marriage were substituted for the gross and heathenish perversions of the New, which had prevailed in the Latin nations. We may rejoice, though with trembling, if we escaped that danger, if we were able to vindicate the suitableness of marriage to all classes, and not to let in the license of divorce. But to whatever causes we owe this blessing, I do not think there is any evidence whatever to show that we owe it to the existence of a double jurisdiction among us, to our ecclesiastical law or ecclesiastical courts. These, it seems to me, have kept up the feeling in our people, that there is something fictitious in the sacredness of marriage, that it is connected with a certain technical and intricate procedure. It is a relic of that system which has destroyed the universality of the Church, which has destroyed the humanity of the Church,

which has destroyed the divinity of the Church, by introducing a father on earth between the Father in Heaven and His children—which has substituted symbols of communion for actual communion, transubstantiated elements for living sacraments. Ecclesiastical Courts give a quasi-sacredness to an institution which we should hold to be essentially sacred, the appearance of an indissoluble union for the truth conveyed in the simple words, "God hath joined them together." So far from admitting that the existence of such fictions contributes to the strength of our domestic or of our Christian life, I hold that we ought to sing songs of triumph at their disappearance; because there is evidence that they are blinding the minds of our people generally—nay, even the minds of wise and holy men—to the divinity of marriage, and are making them impatient of Christ's own words, if they do not give out the sense which they wish to find in them.

I alluded last Sunday to signs of this impatience in quarters where one would the least look for them. In order to maintain the absolute indissolubility of marriage, it has been found necessary to explain away the limitation in the text. For this end, the strangest, I will venture to say, the most fatal experiments have been resorted to. The word πορνεία has been declared to be a technical word. The passages in the Prophets which speak of idolatries as fornications and adulteries, have been quoted to prove that this

religious sense of the word is the most appropriate for our Lord's purpose. Heresy, it is intimated, may be the New Testament substitute for idolatry. *That*, we are left to infer, if we are not directly told, might indeed be a ground for the dissolution of marriage. I do not want another proof to what lengths men may be driven when a theory is at stake, or how much the ecclesiastical theory about marriage may undermine the whole teaching of Scripture respecting it, as well as its actual stability. That language of the Prophets, as I have endeavoured to show you, so far from being technical language, is precisely the natural, simple, human language, in which God reveals His Own relations to men, by which He establishes our relationships to each other. If that is technical phraseology, everything in the Bible is technical. And when we have been brought to believe that it is so,—when we have turned the Scriptures into a great storehouse of fictions,—what has been gained for the argument? Marriage is not more indissoluble than it was before; only, instead of the dissolution taking place on a moral ground,—because the essence of the relation has been destroyed by one of the parties to it,—every husband who suspects his wife of some dangerous opinion may for that reason ask for a bill of divorcement, and put her away. Under such a system, what domestic intercourse would be possible? what domestic suspicion, tyranny, hypocrisy, would be impossible?

I do not oppose maxims like these by speaking of marriage as an earthly institution, a civil contract. I oppose them by the words of Christ, which they seek to explain away. I oppose them by associating marriage with His revelation of Himself. There is indeed an ambiguity about the phrase "civil contract," which it is desirable to remove. Some merely understand by it, that marriage may be completely valid in the eye of man and of God, though performed without an ecclesiastical benediction. From their opinion I do not in the least dissent. The legislative measure of twenty years ago, which authorized English marriages by a civil officer, was, I think, a wise and godly measure. Men had been compelled to use holy words to which they attached little meaning and no faith, if they entered into wedlock at all. They were relieved from that terrible temptation. Those who could use those words, were likely to prize them more, because they did not regard them as necessary formalities, but as witnesses of the sacredness of the ordinance, as preparations for rightly fulfilling their vows. Greater clearness of apprehension respecting the nature of marriage, greater reverence for it, appears to have been the effect of this change. But why? Because it has forced us to reflect, that marriage does not derive its worth from the authority of God's servants, civil and ecclesiastical; that one or other of them may repeat, but neither of them can do more than repeat, His own words:

"These twain are one flesh; let not man put them asunder."

Our experience of this measure should, I think, have made us cautious before we assume that the more recent one respecting divorce has a tendency to put those asunder whom God has joined together—is likely to make divorce regarded with less aversion by our people. So long as it was looked upon as the privilege of a class, the horror of it which is part of our national mind, must have been weakened. A measure which takes away that prestige from it; which treats it, not as a boon which wealth may procure, but as the solemn announcement that the bond has been broken by a crime; which lessens the chance of the vile incidents of that crime being brought forth in courts amidst jests and ribaldry, and paraded in newspapers before the eyes of the public; which at the same time removes the determination of the cases in which separation shall be necessary, to tribunals which shall decide with simple gravity, according to the ordinary maxims of English justice, not according to subtleties of the canon law—may, we would hope, be conducive to the interests of English morality. To prevent statesmen from exercising the most serious judgment as to what *will* conduce to these interests, by alleging that the words of Scripture have peremptorily settled the question, is, it seems to me, to do a positive wrong; to make the legislator less aware of his solemn responsibilities to God; to misrepresent

the character and object of our Lord's teaching. In that teaching, as I have endeavoured to show you, there is the most accurate distinction, the most lively contrast, between that which he can do, who makes rules for the hardness of men's hearts, who imposes penalties on transgression, and that which the Lord of the heart Himself can do, when it submits itself to His guidance. To confuse these provinces together, is to destroy both. To demand that of outward legislation which Christ demands of the man himself, is to make the law a presumptuous despot, and the man a helpless slave. Out of such experiments have proceeded all those perplexities about what is called the alliance of Church and State, which disturb our hearts and our conduct equally. That alliance is either a dishonest compact between two enemies, uneasy while it lasts, doomed to perish like everything that is insincere; or it is a relation implied in the nature of things, in God's eternal order, which cannot be annulled, but which may be disturbed and made abortive by the ambition of either party, by the feeling that each has an interest apart from the other, by the belief that self-interest and mutual fear are the bonds which hold them together, and the refusal to believe that they both exist to serve God's purposes for the good of mankind. When the churchman thinks it is his chief business to watch the statesman, lest he should rob him of some of his privileges or his powers; when the statesman looks upon the

churchman as a person whom he must tolerate, because he does certain jobs which, in the present condition of society, are indispensable, but who is only safe when he confesses himself a hireling, and acts on his confession; how much is the country cheated of the blessing to which it is entitled from both! For the churchman who fancies that the statesman can take his power from him, is surely forgetting what his power is, and Who has entrusted him with it. The statesman who wishes the churchman to account himself a hireling, has surely not understood that the only services he can render to the State are the services of a free man. If his job is to teach men how they may be righteous and honest, you do not surely prepare him for it by requiring him to be unrighteous and dishonest. By these mean jealousies, these petty struggles for precedence, what might be brave and noble proclamations of the glories and powers of the Church, are debased; what might be just and useful legislation, is marred. Good and wise teachers make us dread dangers from State encroachments more than from our own pride and selfishness. Parliaments indulge in petty revenge for the opposition of the clergy, by first forcing them to use services, which the law has itself made unnecessary, in cases where some of them feel that they cannot use them without profanation and a sin against God; and then, when this point has been ungraciously yielded to a pressure from without, by clogging the concession with terms

which must produce endless heart-burnings, if any man in Orders so far forgets the obligations of a Christian gentleman as to accept the right of intruding himself into the Church of a protesting brother. These are signs of a temper which nothing perhaps but such judgments as God is now appointing for us can cure. May these judgments be effectual! May we not need other calamities more tremendous still, to teach us reverence for each other's consciences, reverence for Him Who is the Lord of the conscience, who has given to each his work, and would have none slight his own work or scorn the work of another! May we be taught by terrors and by mercies the sacredness of those bonds by which God has united us to each other, the sacredness of that still more awful and mysterious bond by which He has united us to Himself!

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity.

November 22, 1857.

MATTHEW v. 38–45.

"YE HAVE HEARD THAT IT HATH BEEN SAID, AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH: BUT I SAY UNTO YOU, THAT YE RESIST NOT EVIL: BUT WHOSOEVER SHALL SMITE THEE ON THY RIGHT CHEEK, TURN TO HIM THE OTHER ALSO. AND IF ANY MAN WILL SUE THEE AT THE LAW, AND TAKE AWAY THY COAT, LET HIM HAVE THY CLOKE ALSO. AND WHOSOEVER SHALL COMPEL THEE TO GO A MILE, GO WITH HIM TWAIN. GIVE TO HIM THAT ASKETH THEE, AND FROM HIM THAT WOULD BORROW OF THEE TURN NOT THOU AWAY. YE HAVE HEARD THAT IT HATH BEEN SAID, THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR, AND HATE THINE ENEMY. BUT I SAY UNTO YOU, LOVE YOUR ENEMIES, BLESS THEM THAT CURSE YOU, DO GOOD TO THEM THAT HATE YOU, AND PRAY FOR THEM WHICH DESPITEFULLY USE YOU, AND PERSECUTE YOU; THAT YE MAY BE THE CHILDREN OF YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN: FOR HE MAKETH HIS SUN TO RISE ON THE EVIL AND ON THE GOOD, AND SENDETH RAIN ON THE JUST AND ON THE UNJUST."

IN a time like this, the subject upon which I spoke last Sunday may be considered almost obsolete, for it is two or three months since the nation at large was occupied with it. The subject which the verses I have just read to you suggest, is present to the minds

of us all. There is a cry for vengeance abroad. Some say, "It is so natural, it must be indulged." Some say, "It is so sinful, it ought to be checked." Some say, "Strong punishment is demanded of us; we must not withhold it." Some say, "It might be right otherwise, but Christ has forbidden it." Which of these speaks truth? It is surely unsafe not to think of that question, since we shall act upon the answer to it, whatever it is. We may act indeed without thinking; we may merely obey an impulse of rage or an impulse of compassion. But if we do so in one case, shall we not do so in every case? If we are without a principle to guide us about India, shall we not be without one to guide us in England? Are there not hundreds of questions in our common every-day life which may be determined as this is determined? The controversy is not respecting the special method of treating certain delinquencies. On that point we may gladly seek for the judgments of men possessing special experience, and try to compare their judgments if they differ. But there seems to be equal uncertainty in the public mind about judicial punishments and military punishments; about the use which a Christian may make of the sword of the magistrate and the sword of the soldier; about the necessity of remembering, in such transactions as these, that we are Christians at all. Of that uncertainty we should try to get rid. Unless we make that effort, we may be lenient today, savage tomorrow;

and posterity may doubt whether our leniency or our savageness was most mischievous.

When you first read our text, you may assume that our Lord intends to condemn the two sentences, "*An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,*" "*Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy,*" absolutely, and to substitute for them some fundamentally opposite decrees of His own. On further consideration, you may be inclined to modify that opinion, and to suppose that He only pronounced these maxims unsuitable to the new time, though they may have been needful in the old. Then, again, you will doubt how maxims so broad, so definite, can ever have been true, if they have become false. If in this perplexity you glance back to other passages of the discourse,—to those which I considered last Sunday and the Sunday before, it will strike you that some of the commands which He speaks of, *e. g.* the commands not to kill and not to commit adultery, cannot have been less obligatory at one time than another, though to these also the same mode of speech is applied. It may strike you further, that the precepts which are set in contrast to these, could not by possibility be exchanged for them. The precept, not to be angry with a brother, can never be the same kind of precept as the precept, not to commit murder. Last Sunday I tested this observation by the case of divorce. It seemed clear that our Lord's method of treating that subject was in perfect harmony with

His method of treating those that had gone before. As He did not make a new law respecting murder or adultery, so He did not make a new law respecting divorce. As He spoke to the conscience of the man in the one case, so He spoke to the conscience of the man in the other. By His mode of speaking to the conscience, by recognizing men as children of God, He might so elevate the whole condition of human society, that the outward law would be elevated too. But such an elevation, I endeavoured to show you, would have been impossible if He had merely enacted a new rule, and repealed the old. Can we apply this doctrine to the case before us? Is this part of the Sermon on the Mount consistent with the other parts, or inconsistent? That is the question which I wish to examine.

Before I address myself to it, I would make one remark, which has partly reference to a former passage. One topic, which is continually introduced into this discussion,—the lawfulness of putting any man to death, either on the field of battle or for crimes of which he has been convicted in a Court of Justice,—is not touched by our text. If the words "*Resist not evil*" concerned judicial proceedings at all, they must do much more than forbid the axe or the rope. They must inhibit every attempt to coerce wrong-doers. If they refer to national quarrels at all, they must do much more than merely forbid the shedding of blood. They must inhibit all attempts

by negotiation or arbitration to redress injuries done to the body politic, or to any of its members. Here, then, the occasion for that particular debate does not offer itself. But there was an opening for it before. If, as is alleged, the words "*Thou shalt not kill,*" which were in the old time thought compatible with wars against the Canaanites, with stoning for certain offences, were to have a wider range, a more stringent signification, under the new covenant, the allusion to that commandment would naturally have led to the announcement of the fresh and unsuspected force which was to be given to it. No *such* advantage is taken of the allusion. The law against murder is not declared to mean anything that it did not always mean. But the source of murder, anger in the heart, is brought to light; that Christ promises to extirpate.

I. Dismissing this point for the present, I come to the words, "*An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.*" This sentence appears in the book of Deuteronomy. It is not inserted there as a lazy maxim. It has already been embodied in the Mosaic legislation. It is put forth as a principle of that legislation. It must have dawned upon the mind of the Leader and Prophet of the people as a principle in the government of the world, which proved that it was not under the guidance of a capricious tyrant. Every crime had really, in the Divine order, a punishment which was exactly adapted to its nature. There was

a perfect compensation, however little the mortal Seer might be able to penetrate the mystery of it. He could not trace the intricacies of the Divine plan, but he could believe there *was* a plan. Keeping it in sight, he could, in his own imperfect way, show it forth. The likeness might be as feeble as that of the curtains of the Tabernacle to the pattern in the mount; but it *was* a likeness. By presenting it, he was training his people to confess an order, to submit to an order, to feel that the order was not his, but the Lord God's.

You know how this feeling of a retributive justice in all the occurrences of human life worked in the hearts of the Greek tragedians; how it raised them above the traditions they had learnt respecting divinities who followed their own caprices; how it enabled them to see something like a drama of Providence, even though this might be often confounded with a hard dead Fate, amidst the perversities of men's conduct and the vicissitudes of their fortunes. The faithless husband dies by the hand of the adulterous wife; he is avenged by their son; the matricide must be tormented by the Furies. Such a vision did not offer itself to the Israelite; but he lived in the faith that eye does go for eye, tooth for tooth. Samuel was announcing a law, and executing it, when he said to Agag, "*As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women.*"

The old Judge and Prophet was indulging no personal vengeance against the Amalekite. But has the doctrine of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, *nothing* to do with the feeling of individual vengeance, with the cry for retaliation? Does not the boy or the man who insists upon giving blow for blow, proclaim it in his way, as Samuel proclaimed it in his? We feel, instantly, that there must be something in common between the maxim and the instinct. One would not be, if the other were not. It is easy to pass from this conclusion to two others, that the maxim is only generalized from the personal feeling, and that if the one is to be upheld, the other is not to be checked. But no reasoning is less legitimate than this. There is not one great duty of man, one moral principle, which has not its attendant counterfeit; there is not one great duty or moral principle which men have not tried to explain by the counterfeit; there is not one great truth or moral principle which should not be asserted loudly, for the very purpose of destroying its counterfeit. How is it in this case? The legislator who is most desirous to assert the principle of retribution, and to embody it in his practice, is hindered at every step by the lust of vengeance in the individuals of the society he is trying to set in order. Their notions of retaliation, which are measured by the sense of the wrong they have received, or think they have received,—which take no account of anything but that,—their eagerness to put these notions

into act,—oppose the great obstacle to even-handed, compensating justice. He can only advance very slowly,—watching each step carefully,—in crushing this opposition, not only because it is so formidable, not only because he has to encounter it in himself as well as in every other man, but because he may crush good along with the evil; he may stifle energies which he wants, and which he cannot create; he may even weaken that very sense of right and order to which he must appeal. Nothing is more remarkable in the legislation of Moses, than the pains which are taken to vindicate all vengeance for the Law and the State, while yet there is a recognition of a claim in the private citizen to redress his own wrong. The concession to the individual is fenced round with provisions testifying that he is a servant and instrument of Law; but it is not withdrawn. The education of the people would have been greatly injured, if it had been.

But what help can the lawgiver obtain in this matter, when he has convinced himself by experiment of his own weakness? Shall he call in the terrors of a future state to hinder his subjects from indulging their rage against each other,—from taking the law, as we say, into their own hands? Shall he tell them, or employ priests to tell them, that if they do this for the sake of obtaining temporary satisfaction here, they will have to make satisfaction by punishments in another world? That experiment has been made.

It has been made with every possible advantage. It has been made, not upon an incredulous people, but upon the most credulous; not upon those who rebel against the priestly authority, but upon those who are most subservient to it. How has it succeeded? Is Italy, is Ireland, just the country you would point to as the one in which the lust of private vengeance has been most quelled,—in which it least frequently breaks through restraint? You may say, indeed, that in certain cases the priest is not working with the law, but against it; that he is irritating the wound which he should heal. Allow for all such cases; they may be more numerous than I know; but when the legislator has been able to secure the full co-operation of these threats and warnings, when they have been used simply to forward his purpose, to restrain the outbreaks which he is unable to restrain, I believe you will find that the aid is insignificant, that it does not touch the root of the evil, that it often produces new evils for which the laws must devise new punishments.

It is not this kind of help which Christ offers us in the Sermon on the Mount. Here, as everywhere, He lays His axe to the root of the tree. Here, as everywhere, He justifies that which had been said and done in the old time; while He makes the Revelation which the old time could not make, but which fills up its deficiency, which fulfils its cravings. The elder men had perceived a principle in the outward

economy of God's Kingdom; a principle which they had tried to represent in the economy of their kingdom. Christ reveals the inner mind and purpose of His Father, the inner mind and purpose to which that outward economy is subject, which explains its workings, but which cannot be derived from it. Christ declares that the man, the child of God, may have his inner life moulded in conformity with that inner life of His Father; that so his outward plan and order may be more than ever conformed to those of the same Father. Christ ruling the winds and waves, overcoming sickness, weakness, death,—Christ, reading the hearts and bringing the dark deeds and thoughts of men to light,—makes Himself known as the King and Judge of men. He reveals the royalty and the justice of the Father, from whom His royalty and justice are derived. But Christ, yielding Himself up to die; Christ,—in that sense though in no other,—refusing to resist the evil, that He might overcome evil; Christ, when He was reviled reviling not again, when He was threatened answering not; Christ, in these acts, in these sufferings, reveals God *Himself.* Here we see, not the ways of the Father, but the Father Himself. The perfect obedience of the Son discovers the perfect loving Will of the Father. Infinite Forgiveness and Charity are shown to be at the root of all things; Forgiveness and Charity that are only seen, only satisfied, only made effectual by Submission and Sacrifice; Forgiveness and Charity that

are not intended only to flow forth upon men, but to flow into them, to become a part of *their* character and being.

Now those simple, practical, unrhetorical precepts about going two miles with him who would force you to go one; giving the cloak to him who would take the coat; turning the left cheek to him who smites the right; not turning away from the borrower; not asking goods again; are all so many indications and illustrations of that Divine mind which Christ promises that His Spirit shall form in the minds of those who will submit to Him. They are precepts assuredly, but they are precepts of a Gospel; messages concerning the highest gifts which a Creator can confer on His creatures, a Father upon a child. How little we believe this Gospel, how little we claim the renovating powers of this Spirit, we must all in shame and sadness confess. But if we fairly asked ourselves, "Is this more than I should wish to be? Would less than this make me the thoroughly gracious, forgiving, self-sacrificing man who is alone the blessed man? Would less than this make society what it is struggling to be—what by its principle and constitution it should be?"—if we asked ourselves these questions, I do not know what line of our Lord's picture we could strike out, without destroying its charm and its harmony.

And if again I asked myself how I suppose any approximation to this character has been produced, and

in whom there are the most conspicuous, however imperfect, traces of it; I should be compelled to reply, Where men feel most the impulse to vehemence and impetuosity,—where the circumstances which surround them show them most what necessity there is for the cultivation of a gentle and forgiving temper, because any other must lead to the most frightful acts and consequences,—there, I believe, the aid of the Divine Spirit is most afforded, for the moulding of this character; there, I believe, it actually does come forth in its greatest fulness and beauty. I cannot explain in any other way what many of us have seen, what some of us may have wondered at; that the man who has been bred in camps, who has had his chief experience in them, does, not seldom, exhibit, along with male courage and strength, more of gentleness, sweetness, humanity,—more of the qualities of the woman and the child,—than one is wont to encounter amidst those whose occupations have been exclusively civil. It was in the Roman centurion that our Lord found such faith as He had not found in Israel. And the faith exhibited itself through the learning which he had acquired in the discipline of troops, in the government of men, respecting the mighty power of words, respecting the true secret of rule and of obedience. We sometimes explain away such facts, and preserve our self-complacency by saying, "Oh yes, no doubt the soldier is very earnestly devoted to his *profession*; so far, he is an example to us." It is not in that way

that the best soldiers are examples to us. We are professional enough, and too much, all of us, clergymen, doctors, lawyers. The merely professional soldier is a pedant, just as each one of us is apt to be. But we have seen more examples in that class than in almost any other, of men shaking off their professional trammels, exhibiting hearty human sympathies, showing a reverence for whatever is high and for whatever is lowly.

There is no novelty in this opinion; this ideal of character has been one which Christendom has, in a manner, claimed for the military man, as such, though of course only a few have in any remarkable degree realized it. The quality of gentleness, in its strict sense, with all that is implied in it, was once demanded for them almost exclusively. There was a sense, however vague, in men's minds, that those who had weapons in their hands which might tempt them to be utterly ruthless and savage, needed some special gift of courtesy and nobleness in their own hearts to make them protectors of the commonwealth, to hinder them from being its destroyers. We have made two important discoveries on this subject, which our fathers did not make. One is, that men of all professions are in possession of most dangerous and terrible weapons, which they may use with frightful recklessness and frightful mischief, and therefore that all need a humanizing discipline. We know, we positively know, that the violence of the armed men may not inflict mischief so deadly, so wide-spreading, as the madness

of speculation in the merchant, the chicanery of the lawyer, the anathemas of the priest. And therefore it is necessary that soldiers, merchants, lawyers, priests should by some means or other be made to detest the madness of speculation, chicanery, curses; should be taught to regard their respective powers with awe, as weighty trusts, and to tremble at the abuse of them. This is one truth we have learnt from experience. The other is, that gentleness cannot be assumed from the mere fact of belonging to a *gens*; that whoever does belong to one of high name, with noble images and bright emblazonments, should regard that as a solemn obligation, a retainer for his services to his country, a warning that inhumanity in him is a greater sin; but that neither he nor we ought to depend upon any accidents or circumstances for the production of the habits and tempers which make the good citizen and the good man; that neither he nor we must despair of seeing the noblest, even the most graceful humanity in those who are merely men without any heraldic advantages at all; that we owe more to the Sermon on the Mount, than to all the books and offices of Chivalry, for the unfolding the true ideal of the knightly man—because the true ideal of *the* man; that the divine humanity of Christ must be the ground of gentleness in one class or another; that without His Spirit we shall all be equally at the mercy of our own vagrant passions and impulses; that with His Spirit working in us we may overcome all

temptations, and may go forth boldly and manfully to execute His purposes, to vindicate His retributive law, to inflict on the wrong-doer punishments so stern, even, impartial, as shall be a lesson to all that Righteousness, and not Chance or Violence, rules in this earth of God's. And if through any negligence in this work we leave the worshipers of evil and capricious gods, to think that their theory of the universe is the true one, that the principle of justice and retribution of which the conscience testifies is not a true one—not one which can make itself actually felt,—I believe we are answerable to God for committing another injustice to our heathen subjects, over and above the wrongs we have committed already. To let the consciousness of former guilt withhold us from imparting this lesson is to increase our guilt. If any should succeed in persuading us that it would be obedience to the Sermon on the Mount—to the commands of Christ—to throw our arms away, to let the sword of justice rest in its scabbard, we shall *not* throw our arms away, we shall use them wickedly, cruelly, without any respect to the ends for which they have been given us; the impulse of vengeance will become our law, because we recognize no other; the sword will be as sharp as ever, but it will be the sword of *in*justice. A great responsibility therefore rests upon us, the ministers of the Gospel, that we should not rob men of the real weight and emphasis and authority of this discourse, by using it to denounce that which it does not denounce, in ac-

tual words or by any legitimate inference. Its full clear meaning and blessing is for the soldier, is for every man. It strikes at a multitude of feelings which are very natural to us all; it shows us how we may change them for feelings that appertain to us as children of God, as made in His image. It does not tell us that these feelings, in their very highest form, are incompatible with our using any one of the energies or instruments which God has put into our hands, as an energy and instrument for fulfilling His purposes. He is carrying on a work of justice, of retribution, of education among the sons of men. He bids us in all things be fellow-workers with Him. We may fancy we show our faith in Him by throwing away our swords and waiting for Him to protect us, just as we may fancy we show our faith in Him by letting our ploughs rust and expecting Him to send us harvests. But this is not faith, it is the opposite of faith. It is the worship of Fate. It is Mahometanism adapted to Christian notions. We are to plough in faith, we are to go to battle in faith. It is the belief in a God, a God of truth, a God Who teaches the hands to war and the fingers to fight, which nerves men for the toilsome enterprise of ridding the earth of its weeds as well as of its disturbers and oppressors.

II. But it was also said of old, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy." Where was it said? "In heathen countries," some one will answer.

Certainly it was said in heathen countries; and not in the worst of them, but the best. The sense of neighbourhood, the sympathies of race, the antipathies which answer to these sympathies, characterized the Greek city, with all its great energies, its growing civilization.

No such development of this feeling was possible in the wide Asiatic Empires. There might be despots craving for a universal dominion, with the keen eagle eye for slaughter and blood which we see in the Nineveh monuments; but there was no neighbourhood, none of that kind of love, or that kind of hatred, which was nursed by the small republic. To which does mankind owe most? which has done most to humanize the world? The evil is obvious, any one can detect it. But what was the good which lay beneath the evil? What can explain how so many of the results were good and not evil?

There was the precious sense of kinsmanship, the link between the present and the past. There was the feeling that relations among men pointed to relations of men with beings higher than themselves. There was the belief that fellowship and the power which dwells in fellowship is mightier than all physical forces. There was the awakening of the human in the members of those little communities, side by side with the animal, and the growing conviction that the younger was to rule over the elder; that which looked weak over that which looked strong.

These are the germs of wonderful distinctions, of wonderful combinations. There is a mystery in these thoughts which the Divine revelation to the Jews could partly expound; which it needed a Christendom fully to unravel.

The Jew was taught to love his neighbour and hate his enemy. The thought which is expressed in this sentence, quickened his acts, quickened his devoutest and holiest songs. God had chosen him to be a witness for Himself. He was bound to all Israelites by the everlasting covenant which bound him to the unseen God. They were his neighbours, his fellow-workers, his fellow-witnesses. Their transgressions were his transgressions, their sorrows his sorrows. Nothing which touched the commonwealth could be of indifference to him. But his existence was a warfare. All around him, pressing close upon him, threatening the very vitals of his national existence, were idolatries, the worship of visible gods, of dead gods, of evil gods, the denial of the living and true God, the God of righteousness. These he is to hate with a perfect hatred. He is to count them his enemies. They take actual forms. They embody themselves in persons. Against these he must fight. It is no struggle with abstractions. Chariots of iron are pouring down against him, he must go forth to hew in pieces those who sit in them. Nor is his war only defensive. The cup of the iniquities of the Canaanites is full; they have made the earth intolerable by

their crimes; he goes forth to dispossess and destroy them.

To suppose that the hatred of enemies in the majority of the hosts of Israel, was directed against principles and not men, would be absurd; to suppose that in any man of these hosts there was no mingling of rage and indignation against those whom he was striking down, may be equally absurd. But this may be said, that just so far as they were a host, acting under a common leader, with a common purpose, believing themselves to be the servants of the Most High God, just so far was the meanness, covetousness, petty enmity of each man diminished, just so far did the inspiration of a principle overcome the sordid impulses which set men one against the other. People with a work in hand do not stop, happily for them, to analyze their feelings and motives, but they are raised without knowing it to a higher level. While there is a call for united energy, devotion, self-sacrifice, vulgarer thoughts are held in check. It is after the fight is done that the dangerous hour comes. It is when there is power without the sense of unity and government, that all the pent-up ferocity and wickedness of men displays itself. This may be said; and it surely may be said also, that when the leader or king of the Israelitish host poured out his prayers with a fervency and force he had never known in the same degree till then,—however he might express himself about his enemies, whatever visible persons

might seem to him to be his enemies,—his mind was carried in the very act of communion with God into another region, into a purer atmosphere. A better Spirit than his own took possession of him. He went forth hating what God hated, yet not the less prepared to do just the work which was before him; his heart and conscience nerved, not distracted or made doubtful, by having sought the presence of Him Who is merciful and gracious, and forgiveth iniquity and transgression and sin.

It was in a time of peace, not of war, of peace at least so far as Israelites were concerned, that our Lord opened His lips to deliver the Sermon on the Mount. Canaanitish wars had been over for centuries. The Jews were traders, money-getters, with no sense of any commission to overthrow the idolatry of the Greek or Latin cities into which they might go. But in that peaceful mammonish time, the maxim "*Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thy enemy*" had taken its meanest, most spiteful, most cruel form, had sheltered itself most under the sanctions of religion. The Pharisee taught his countryman that he was to hate the heathen as an enemy of God, even when he was trafficking with him and turning him to account. The other half of the precept he could not inculcate in the same manner. The love of the neighbour did not come at the Pharisee's bidding, was not kindled into much warmth by his example. But there was a plausible easy substitute for it. He might

love the traditions of his land just because they separated him from mankind. The love for these might represent and comprehend the love of God and of the neighbour both. Our Lord was arming his disciples to go forth against Greek and Roman as well as Jewish idolatry, to go forth with other arms, but not in another spirit, than that in which Joshua and David had gone forth. And *therefore* He said to them, "*Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth His rain on the just and on the unjust.*" His Apostles took these words literally. They obeyed these words both in the letter and in the spirit. Because they did so, they were able to establish the Church or Kingdom of God upon earth, they could maintain their Jewish privilege of being heralds of blessings to all the families upon earth, they could claim the whole earth as belonging to God and to His Christ. Their Jewish narrowness disappeared as their Jewish faith became stronger. They could submit to all persecutions, from the circumcision or the uncircumcision, that they might assert for both the position of new creatures in Christ Jesus. Tempted every hour to hate the men who resisted them and hated them, they grew every hour, as they kept Christ's commandment, into a sympathy with

all men as their neighbours, as their brethren,—into an intenser hatred of that which kept them from being brethren, which was misrepresenting the Father in Heaven,—to a stronger conviction that He would use them in their spheres, and all other Christians in theirs, to put down wrong, and to establish the dominion of righteousness and peace. They have bequeathed to us their witness of that state of mind which the Spirit of God would produce in every one of us. But they have bequeathed to us no protest against the deeds or principles of their forefathers. They have said nothing which can lead us to think that, while there is outward palpable evil in the world, that is not to be put down by outward palpable swords. They have left no sentence which leads us to confound, multitudes which lead us to distinguish, the two spheres of our work. They have left no precepts which would lead us to suppose that we ought to limit their Master's precept, "*Be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect,*" to one of these spheres when we may extend it to both,—when we may at once be witnesses of His infinite charity, and executors of the justice which does not interfere with this charity, but is needful to make it effectual.

III. I have left myself no time to notice that very respectable body of men who have been the principal supporters of the doctrine I have combated in this sermon, and an allusion to whom, by a popular writer, induced me first to preach on our Lord's Dis-

course. I cannot speak so scornfully of the founder of that Society as this writer does. I believe Fox to have been a most remarkable man, raised from the heart of the English people, to bear witness of many truths which it concerned Englishmen at that time and in all times to be acquainted with; to bear witness against many errors into which the clergy as well as the soldiery, into which Episcopalians as well as Puritans, had fallen then, and into which they have fallen since. That which is sometimes imputed to this teacher and to his followers as a fanatical folly, that they dwelt so much upon the power and the presence of the Spirit of God, I esteem as their highest merit. I only wish that we had profited more by the vehemency of their language upon that subject; because I believe, if we are consistent with our creeds and prayers, we can be, we shall be, much more thorough witnesses for the gift and continual abiding of that Holy Spirit, than they are. *We* ought not to be content with thinking of a Spirit Who comes in momentary gusts. We ought to believe that He has taken possession of our bodies as His temples, to make us holy and without blame before God in love; to unite us to Christ, our ascended Lord; to overcome for us the world, the flesh, and the devil; to fit us for all common duties and occupations; to make professions, civil, ecclesiastical, military, safe and honourable; to make the occupation of the tradesman also—his dealings with money, the love of which is said to be

the root of all evil—beneficial and not accursed; to consecrate all studies, arts, even amusements, to the service of God and not of self. Such an estimate of the power and work of the Holy Spirit we can scarcely form if we meditate exclusively on His dealings with the individual soul, if we do not regard Him as proceeding from the Father and the Son, to bind together and quicken a whole body. Had the idea of a Father Who would have His children be perfect as He is perfect, presented itself to the mind of the Quaker with the same power with which the idea of a spiritual influence has presented itself, I cannot but think that that last idea would have been far more substantial, practical, universal for him; that his charity, which has been worthy of all admiration, would have been less liable to degenerate into a sentimental tolerance of wrong, a mere dread of inflicting pain; that he would have considered how the loving Father of All spared not pain to His Only Begotten Son, spares not pain to any of His adopted children, when it is for their profit; that he would less have trembled to commit criminals to Him Who judgeth righteously, through a notion which is most irreverent, which leads to the greatest perplexities in morality, which has disturbed the consciences of jurymen, sometimes perhaps the consciences of Secretaries of State, that the greater a man's enormities have been, the more necessary it is not to deprive him of his only chance of repentance. These and other strange outrages upon the sense and

reason of mankind, involving also suspicions of the character of God, the Quaker would have escaped, I think, if he had more literally adhered to the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount respecting the Father in Heaven; if he had believed more thoroughly that Jesus Christ came to manifest the Father, and, by His sacrifice, to make the Father and mankind at one.

That eminent historian to whom I have alluded before, in one of the lively antitheses for which he is so celebrated, holds up George Fox to great ridicule for his literal construction of the passages in the Sermon on the Mount, which are so obviously figurative; for his figurative interpretation of our Lord's commands respecting the Sacraments, which are so obviously literal. I cannot avail myself of this clever sarcasm. To me it seems that Fox was a perfectly consistent man; that his error respecting the Sermon on the Mount was exactly of the same kind with his error respecting the Sacraments. Had he believed, that by the simple outward rite of Baptism, God has claimed us all for his spiritual children, he would not, I think, have needed to explain away the commandments of the old economy, that he might vindicate the glory of the new. He would have seen that there is an outward world as well as an inward; that God has made the outward dependent upon the inward; but that He has joined them together, and that we cannot put them asunder. Had he believed that by the actual tokens of bread and wine, God declares to us that

we are members of one body in His Son, one body with all that have gone before and with all that shall come after, because one sacrifice has been offered for all, on which all may feed; had he not shrunk from a Sacrament at which each may confess his sin against his brother on earth, his forgetfulness of his Father in Heaven, he would have seen that to forgive, to pray for enemies, to bless them that curse, to bear all injuries, may be the gift and privilege of men all the more, because they believe that they are pledged by the holiest bonds, the most awful oaths, to go forth in God's Name, with whatever weapons He puts into their hands, to assert His order against all that is working disorder in His world. They would have believed that no religious sect, no commercial congress, nothing but a united Christian family speaking to the consciences and spirits of men, can hasten the time when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, nor be obliged to learn war any more.

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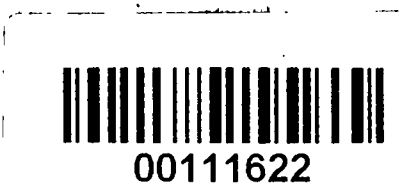
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